



THE CRASHAW BROTHERS

By
Arthur Stanwood Pier

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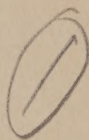
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By
Arthur Stanwood Pier

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THE NEW BOY. Illustrated.

HARDING OF ST. TIMOTHY'S. Illustrated.

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
BOSTON AND NEW YORK

THE CRASHAW BROTHERS



KEATING LEAPED AND REACHED (p. 178)

THE CRASHAW BROTHERS

BY

ARTHUR STANWOOD PIER

AUTHOR OF "HARDING OF ST. TIMOTHY'S," "BOYS OF
ST. TIMOTHY'S," "THE NEW BOY," ETC.



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

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CONTENTS

I. THE GAME WITH THE SIXTH	1
II. THE LEFT TACKLE	27
III. THE WEAK SPOT	48
IV. IN VACATION	71
V. THE CAPTAIN OF THE CREW	87
VI. A ST. JOHN'S CHAMPION	112
VII. FAREWELL TO A HERO	130
VIII. SHELDON'S SUCCESSOR	154
IX. THE ELEVENTH INNING	171
X. THE PINCH HITTER	183
XI. THE BOAT RACE	200

THE CRASHAW BROTHERS

CHAPTER I

THE GAME WITH THE SIXTH

IT was noon of the first day of the fall term at St. Timothy's. Most of the boys had dispersed after the morning recitations, but on the steps of the Study sat Guy Blanchard, watching Jim Payne and Fred Bell throwing a ball back and forth. Blanchard knew that, as Secretary of the Pythians, he ought to be canvassing the new boys, trying to secure the most promising as members; but it was pleasant and warm in the sun, he had not seen Jim and Fred for three months, and it was tempting to linger while they chaffed each other and himself.

"Burn it in now, Fred; ah, go on, burn it!" entreated Payne; and in response to this urging, the ball came singing and buried itself in his glove with a comfortable thud.

2 THE CRASHAW BROTHERS

“Lost your speed, have n’t you, Fred?”
Blanchard’s tone was commiserating.

“Glass arm, sure enough,” lamented Payne.
“Is that so now!”

Bell unlimbered his long length and threw a ball so swift that Payne, getting the force of it on his bare hand, danced and shook his fingers.

“Say, just ease off a little, will you, Fred?”
he asked; and then Blanchard, laughing, rose and walked away towards the School, in pursuit of his duty.

Just outside the Study gate he met a strong-looking, light-haired boy with a pleasant, freckled face; he stopped him at once.

“Hello, new kid! What’s your name?”

“Crashaw — Edward Crashaw.”

“That’s a queer name. Any relation to Crashaw at St. John’s?”

“Brother.”

“The dickens you say!” Blanchard stared at him, then seized him by the arm as if afraid he might escape, and turning shouted to the ball-players, —

"Hey, Jim! Fred! Come and see what I've found."

The captive Crashaw grinned and made no attempt to get away. He seemed big enough to free himself if he cared to — more sturdy and heavy than Blanchard, even though a year or two younger. But he remained quiet in Blanchard's grasp and offered the two boys who came up a cheerful smile.

"What is it, Blanche?" said Jim Payne.

"Guess what it is!" cried Blanchard. "It says it's a brother of Crashaw of St. John's."

"Charley Crashaw — St. John's captain?"

They looked at the stranger with widening eyes.

"Yes." His grin became deprecating. "I admit it."

"That's funny," remarked Bell. "How did you happen to come to St. Timothy's then?"

"Oh, Charley and I are always scrapping — always on opposite sides," Crashaw answered.

"I'm always scrapping with my kid brother," said Blanchard. "But I wouldn't let him go to St. John's."

4 THE CRASHAW BROTHERS

"Charley did n't stand for my coming to St. Timothy's. But he's too much the king at St. John's. It would n't be any fun to go there and be passed along up, just as Charley's brother."

"Why, you'd have had a cinch," declared Payne. "I don't see why you did n't do it."

"Well, that's why. It made Charley awfully peevish. He said I was disgracing the family."

The boys bristled.

"St. John's is a pretty good school," said Blanchard. "But the fellows there get so cocky about it they make me tired."

"We'd have licked them in football last year if it had n't been for your brother." Payne's voice betrayed resentment. "He had no right to get round Tom Stevens on that criss-cross the way he did."

"He's a peach of a quarterback," acknowledged Blanchard. "Are you any good at the game?"

"I've played some. But I guess I'll never be in Charley's class."

"What position?"

"Tackle."

"I'll book you for the Pythians," said Blanchard. "You'll join the Pythians — not the Corinthians; understand?"

"Just as you say," replied Crashaw. "Do you mind telling me who you are?"

"This is Payne, and this is Bell, and my name's Blanchard."

"Are you the Blanchard that's captain and quarterback of the St. Timothy's eleven?"

"The same."

"Are you really!" Crashaw surveyed him with frank and flattering interest; then he turned to the others. "Are you the Bell that pitches on the nine?"

"Even so," said Bell.

"But he's never heard of me," sighed Payne dolefully.

"I have if you're the captain of the nine."

"Aren't we the celebrated bunch, though!" exclaimed Payne with admiration.

They were all somewhat swelled up with pleasure and pride, and went away entertaining an unusually high opinion of the "new

kid." They talked about him among themselves and among their friends, and agreed that in choosing St. Timothy's instead of St. John's he had shown a very proper, independent spirit, and deserved to be encouraged in every way possible. Besides, he was an attractive boy, with his frank eyes and humorous smile and quiet voice.

Meanwhile, Edward Crashaw was making himself at home among the members of his own form. There as well as among the older fellows the name of Crashaw carried weight; and a certain romantic interest attached to one who had broken away as he had done from traditions and conventions. In a few days, though a new boy, he was as popular and as well known as any one in the form. One thing that contributed to this result was his easy manner of adapting himself to conditions and assuming leadership.

The September afternoons were warm, too warm to encourage an interest in football; the boys played tennis and organized scrub baseball games. Edward and a tall slim fellow

named Keating and a stocky pink-cheeked boy named Lawrence were the baseball enthusiasts of the Fourth Form; they happened to be assigned seats at the same table and early came to know one another. In all the study recesses they would be out passing a ball back and forth; in the afternoons they collected their friends and had scrub games in a corner of the big athletic field.

Edward was much the best of them; he had caught on a nine that summer at the seashore, he had a keen eye, and was a naturally free, hard hitter — and besides he loved the game. So in a very few days he had established himself as the baseball leader of the form; and now and then some of the older fellows would pause to look on at those Fourth Form contests and would carry the word to Bell and Payne that the youngsters were pretty good, and that Crashaw anyway was a real ball-player.

“I tell you what I’d like to do,” said Edward one afternoon as he walked with Lawrence and Keating down to the field. “I’d

like to get up a Fourth Form nine and challenge the Sixth."

"Let's do it," said Lawrence promptly. "You'll catch and I'll pitch — what?"

"Yes, and Keat on first and Gordon on second and — I'll see the fellows about it to-day and find out how it strikes them."

"Of course the Sixth will beat us," said Keating. "With Payne and Bell, the regular School battery, and some of those other big fellows."

"We can make them hustle," declared Edward. "And it would be good fun to have a real match game instead of playing scrub all the time."

Not only Keating and Lawrence but all the other fellows whom he asked agreed with him. Before the afternoon was over they had elected him captain and authorized him to make arrangements if possible for a game with the Sixth Form on the following Saturday.

"It would be just like them to turn us down," said Keating. "They'll probably tell you you're fresh to suggest such a thing."

Keating was a new boy who did not know any Sixth Formers and looked upon them all as cold and snobbish.

“Not much they won’t,” said Lawrence, who was not a new boy. “They’ll think they can bat us all over the lot, and that it will give them something to jolly us about the rest of the year.”

“Well, maybe it will,” said Edward. “But it will be fun just the same — especially if the fellows in the Fourth who don’t play will come out on the side-lines and yell for us.”

Lawrence snickered to himself. “I tell you what would be great,” he said. “Let’s get a rise out of the Fifth Form. It’s a poor form, you know — hardly any good athletes in it. Let’s challenge the Sixth to play us for the championship of the School. That will make the Fifth so sore they’ll bite.”

That idea did not interest Edward especially, though it made him laugh. The game was the thing that appealed to him. He went to Blanchard before study that afternoon; he felt that he knew Blanchard a little better than he did Bell or Payne, and moreover that

10 THE CRASHAW BROTHERS

Blanchard might be more approachable than either of those fellows. He said to him, —

“We’ve got a Fourth Form baseball nine that we think is pretty good, and we’d like to challenge the Sixth Form to a game next Saturday. Do you think you could get up a nine and play us?”

“I don’t see why not,” Blanchard replied. “It ought to be good sport. I’ll ask Jim Payne and Fred Bell about it; they’re our baseball stars. How does it come that you’re one? That’s one thing your brother never did, isn’t it?”

“Oh, Charley plays a little. But he never was very good at it. In the summer he sails and plays tennis — and in the spring at St. John’s he rows. So he’s not had much chance to play ball. But I always liked it.”

Blanchard looked at the boy’s eager face and honest eyes with a smile; somehow he found himself liking young Edward Crashaw very much — just as he had always liked Charles Crashaw, even in conflict. But he could not forbear teasing Edward a little.

"You're pretty up and coming for a new kid, aren't you — organizing a ball nine and challenging the Sixth the first week you've been in the School!"

"Oh," said Edward, flushing, "you think I've been fresh!"

"I did n't say that; I said I thought you were an enterprising young hustler." Blanchard's eyes were twinkling.

"I suppose it might have been better if I'd let one of the old boys in the Fourth run the thing," admitted Edward. "Only I never thought of that. I was so interested in getting up the game, and when I suggested it they all wanted me to go ahead with it."

"Good thing they did, too," was Blanchard's comment. "None of those other kids would have gumption enough. Don't you worry; nobody thinks you're fresh, Crashaw."

At that assurance Edward's face cleared, and he went off to report the success of his negotiations to his friends. Blanchard laughed in telling Bell and Payne about it.

"Funny such a husky, beefy lad should be

12 THE CRASHAW BROTHERS

so sensitive ; his face flamed right up when he thought I was calling him fresh ; his feelings were awfully hurt."

"If he thinks he and his kindergarten nine can beat us, his feelings are going to be worse hurt," said Bell. "I guess we will take his Fourth Form nine on all right."

So the challenge was definitely accepted, and at Mr. Elwood's table, where sat Edward and Keating and Lawrence, there was great excitement that night. And that evening during the study hour, Lawrence, instead of working over the Virgil which lay open on his desk, engaged himself for some minutes in lettering a placard, which he afterwards hung on the bulletin-board in the hall. It read as follows :

THE FOURTH FORM NINE

Will Play

THE SIXTH FORM NINE

For the

SCHOOL CHAMPIONSHIP

On Saturday, September 25.

Free Seats Reserved for

THE FIFTH FORM.

Per order.

The notice stayed on the bulletin-board until the next morning, when it was discovered and torn down by some indignant Fifth Formers.

"They think you did it," Lawrence announced gleefully to Edward at dinner that day. "My, but they're hot about it!"

"Why do they put it on me?" Edward asked.

"Oh, they've heard that it was you that got up the game, and they think this was just part of it."

"I should think you'd better claim the credit that belongs to you," Keating remarked dryly.

"I'm willing," Lawrence laughed. "Spread it round if you want to. But I guess it's too late. The Fifth Form are all saying Crashaw's the freshest thing that ever came down the pike. They're all going out to root for the Sixth in the game."

"We'll have to get the whole Fourth Form out then to back us up," said Edward.

"The way the Fifth are feeling, there's likely to be a riot." Lawrence seemed to rejoice at the prospect.

"If the Fifth are angry at Crashaw for something he did n't do, I think you ought to let him out of it," declared Keating.

"Oh, I'm proud to be considered the author. I think the notice was mighty good — wish I could have thought it up," said Edward.

As long as Edward felt that way about it, Lawrence decided that the authorship of the notice might be worth claiming, and he proceeded at once to assert it. In consequence he was denounced as cheap enough by some of his Fifth Form friends, while others abated not at all their resentment against the innocent Crashaw; well, they said, perhaps he did n't actually write the notice, but he must have known about it, and anyway it was he who had the effrontery to challenge the Sixth Form and ignore the Fifth, and that was a fresh enough thing for any Fourth Former, much less a new kid, to do. It just showed that he had the regular bumptious St. John's spirit in him; he ought to have gone to St. John's like his brother.

That was the way the conservative and in-

censed Fifth Formers talked among themselves, and they resolved to avenge themselves upon the ambitious youngsters during the game.

Some rumors of their sentiments and preparations came to Edward, but nothing definite; the fellows in the Sixth Form whom he knew, like Blanchard and Bell and Payne, could have enlightened him if they had chosen, for with them some of the aggrieved Fifth Formers were quite confidential. But they remained silent, partly because they did n't see any use in hurting Crashaw's feelings, and partly too because they did n't want to spoil the prospective fun. Edward himself was so busy practising with his nine the two days before the game that he had neither thoughts nor ears for anything else.

He was therefore somewhat surprised on Saturday afternoon when he went out on the field to find the Fifth Form squatting all along the first-base line, several of them armed with shotguns, one with a small cannon, and others already making dismal noises with tin horns.

The non-combatants of the Sixth Form were also massed with them, making a display of numbers far more impressive than that afforded by the Fourth Form supporters on the third-base line, to whom a few curious and undesired small boys of the First and Second and Third Forms had attached themselves.

During the few minutes of field practice the Fourth Form nine had an opportunity to accustom themselves to what was to come — abusive comments, derisive cheers, personal remarks of the most unflattering kind. Keating at first base was naturally the most direct recipient of these, but he kept working away with the wad of chewing-gum in his mouth and otherwise never changed a muscle of his face — not even when the fellows just behind him condoled with him on being so pigeon-toed and urged him not to walk on his ankle-bones.

The game began with the Sixth Form in the field — Bell pitching, Payne catching, Blanchard at shortstop, Durant at second base, and Watts at first. It was a very quiet inning, and Edward began to think that per-

haps the demonstration for which the spectators had prepared was going to fizzle out.

His men did nothing at the bat that inning. Lawrence, who was first up, struck out.

"Ah, but he's such a wag!" some Fifth Form voice cried soothingly.

Dunbar, who followed Lawrence, popped up a fly which Durant caught; and then Winslow hit an easy grounder to the pitcher.

"O easy marks!" jeered the Fifth and Sixth Form crowd as Edward and his players took the field.

Then with the first ball pitched, the din began; the horns tooted, the whistles blew, the jeers for the pitcher, the catcher, and the first baseman became continuous. Blanchard, the first batter, took his base on balls, and Edward walked out to hand the ball to Lawrence and steady his nerves.

"Take him out, take him out! He's cracked already!" yelled the Fifth Form.

The next moment Edward, with a lightning throw to Keating, caught Blanchard far off first base.

"Dreaming, dreaming!" sang Keating as he put the ball to him; and then he turned to the crowd behind him, which had been momentarily shocked into quiet.

"Keep up your noise, fellows," he said. "You'll wake your men after a while."

They began again when Durant hit a high fly to Dunbar in right field; just as it was falling into Dunbar's hands, all the whistles, the horns, the three shotguns and the cannon went off, and Dunbar dropped the ball. Amid more noise Lawrence gave Bell his base, and then Watts advanced both Durant and Bell by a sacrifice. Payne came to the bat and drove in two runs by a hit to left field; a moment later, however, the side was out when Cary hit the ball into Keating's hands.

"Let 'em yell," said Edward to Lawrence. "We'll soon get used to their noise, and you won't mind it a bit."

Edward was the first man at bat that inning. Bell knew instinctively as he confronted him that here was a fellow who could hit the ball. He recognized the dangerous batter by

his pose, by the unperturbed steady eye and motionless waiting bat.

With the intention of shaking his confidence and scaring him back from the plate, Bell sent a swift inshoot, but he did not place it accurately; Edward received it in the ribs with a grunt and trotted down to first base.

"One for his St. John's brother," cried a Fifth Former vindictively.

"I wish he'd got it instead of me," said Edward, grinning and rubbing his side.

On the next ball pitched he was off for second. Durant stood squarely in the way; Edward slid into him feet first just as he was catching the ball and upset him; and Edward was safe at second base amid the delighted shrieks of the Fourth Form and the violent demands of the Fifth and Sixth: "Put him out! Mucker ball! Take him out!"

Durant got to his feet, furious.

"Don't play any of your dirty St. John's tricks here," said Durant.

"Dirty nothing!" said Edward, dusting off

his clothes. "If you stand square in the baseline, of course I'll run into you."

"Don't be fresh," Durant admonished him.

Edward paid no attention to that, but shouted down to Avery, who was the next batter: "Pitcher's easy, Avery; you can hit it."

Avery made a good sacrifice and Edward reached third, and on another sacrifice by Hunter he scored. The Fourth Form were plucking up courage, and were cheering bravely, but that was the only run they made until the fifth inning; and meanwhile the Sixth Form had scored four more.

In the fifth inning, Keating, who had been playing a fine game in the field in spite of the disadvantages of his position, but who had been unable to hit the ball, was first at bat.

"One man gone already," cried the first-base mob.

But Keating waited patiently and fouled all the good balls and finally was given his base.

Edward went down to coach him. "Take a good lead, Keat; take a good lead."

Lawrence came to the bat.

“Pitcher’s easy, Laurie; hope he improves before the St. John’s game next spring.”

Even the Sixth Form laughed at that, and Bell waved at Edward an indulgent hand. But he was getting careless, and pretty soon he tossed Lawrence an easy one, and Lawrence hit it smartly into left field. Keating was on second base, Lawrence on first, no one was out; and the Fourth Form were beginning to shout vociferously. Dunbar came to the bat.

Just as the ball was pitched, there was a flash from some one in the crowd near the batter and Dunbar stepped back helplessly from the plate.

“Strike!” called the umpire.

Edward from the coaching-line had seen the flash and the instant bewildered look on Dunbar’s face. He walked towards the batter, calling, “Wait till you get a good one, pick out the good one;” and then suddenly, just as Bell was delivering the ball, he made a dive and a grab and wrenched a pocket-mirror out of a big Sixth Former’s hand.

“That’s one thing that’s not fair,” he said. “I’ll give it to you after the game.” And he thrust it into his hip-pocket.

The Sixth Former, a big, good-natured looking fellow, whose name Edward did not know, was dazed by this sudden audacity, and stood with nothing to say; then, after Edward had turned and resumed his coaching, his cheeks grew red. But although some of his friends crowded round and urged him vociferously, he made no move to recover his property.

When Dunbar had struck out, as he did quite promptly, and Edward went to the bat, there was an outburst of derisive cries.

“Pishaw, P—shaw!” cried somebody.

“Pishaw, P—shaw, Freshy Crashaw!” cried somebody else, and pretty soon the Fifth and Sixth Form crowd took up the cry and chanted it unctuously.

Edward gave them a hurt, surprised look; then his lips tightened and he faced Bell. They did not keep up their derisive chant very long, for Edward swung at the second ball pitched, and sent it on a beautiful swift rising

line far over the centre-fielder's head. Keating and Lawrence came home on a trot, and Edward, sprinting round the bases, arrived almost as soon as they did ; it was a clean home run.

It silenced the scoffers for that inning ; but at intervals afterward throughout the game, when nothing else occurred to them, and the Fourth Form was in the field or Edward was at the bat, they would start the chant, " Pishaw, P—shaw ! Freshy Crashaw ! "

Edward could n't quite understand why they had singled him out as the object of their antipathy, but he tried to be cheerful, and he kept on playing just as hard as if his team stood a chance of winning.

He was the only one on it who could hit Bell's pitching, and though he drove in three more runs they were n't of much value in the final result. Lawrence weakened, and the Fourth Form infield, with the exception of Keating, went to pieces in the seventh inning ; and when the game ended, the score was fifteen to seven for the Sixth.

Edward was engaged in condoling with his

players and receiving the expressions of goodwill of some of the Fourth Form, when Payne and Blanchard and Bell came up to him. They broke through the more insignificant persons, and Payne seized Edward by the shoulders and said : —

“I’ve got you nailed down for a place on the nine next spring; and don’t you forget it.”

“Oh, do you think so?” Edward’s face lighted up.

“Jing!” said Bell. “I never in all my life threw them in to such a slugger.”

“I don’t wonder your brother was peevish at your not going to St. John’s,” said Blanchard. “Now if you’re only as good at football — !”

Such praise was sweet to Edward’s ears. He was grateful to them for it, and to the fellows of his own form who crowded round him. The unkindness of the jeering crowd, the sting of being called fresh, of having an ignominious rhyme made on his name, all vanished. And then he suddenly remembered.

"Oh, I've got to give something to somebody," he cried, and broke away.

He saw the Sixth Former from whom he had taken the pocket-mirror leaving the field with Durant. For a moment he hesitated; Durant had spoken in a pretty nasty way to him during the game. But he ran up to them.

"Maybe I ought to apologize for snatching this the way I did," he said, holding out the mirror. Then, because something in the expression of the boy who took it won his confidence, he added on a whimsical impulse, "I hope it has n't inconvenienced you — my keeping it."

"I have n't especially cared to look at myself since then," the boy confessed with a smile. "You were all right, Crashaw."

Edward gave him a look of respect as he turned away.

"What was that?" asked Durant. And then Edward heard him continue in a loud, disgusted voice, "Shelly, do you know, that's the freshest young pup!"

Instantly all the pleasant things went out

of Edward's life ; there was the hurt, surprised feeling in his heart again, and the burning memory of the Fifth Form jeers ; he felt as if he had been branded, unjustly branded, with a name of infamy.

CHAPTER II

THE LEFT TACKLE

EDWARD'S nature was not one that could remain long depressed over the thought that an injustice was being done him. He found too much that was new and exhilarating to occupy his mind. The very achievements which had brought down upon him the censorious comments of some of the older boys had made him quite a hero in his own form. The old boys of the Fourth Form, like Lawrence, became his aggressive champions against the charge of freshness.

"Go on!" Lawrence said one day to a group of Fifth Formers, friends of his, who had been disparaging "Pishaw, P—shaw," which was their name for Edward. "Go on! You're jealous. Crashaw's a bigger man than you've got, and you know it. There is n't a near athlete in your whole form. You take it as a personal insult if anybody gets out and

does things better than you can; you think then that he's fresh."

"That isn't why we think you're fresh, Laurie," retorted Tweed, one of the Fifth Formers.

"Before we'd let a new kid — a new kid that ought to have gone to St. John's, too — come into *our* form and boss *us* round!" virtuously observed Horne, another of the Fifth Formers. "I'm glad to think that *we* have some self-respect."

"I'm surprised to think you have," said Lawrence.

They made a dash for him, but he turned and ran, and took refuge from them in the library.

Blanchard, captain of the Pythians, and Durant, captain of the Corinthians, called out the football candidates on the same day. After the practice Blanchard told Edward that he was promising — especially as it was a bad year for tackles. "Durant's the only first-class tackle in the School," he said. "I was wondering whom I could put

opposite him. Maybe you'll have to be the man."

"Of course I'll be awfully glad if I can make the eleven," said Edward. "I'd rather play against anybody than Durant, though."

"Most fellows would. He's the best man the Corinthians have."

"I was n't thinking of that. He does n't like me. I guess it won't be very pleasant."

"Why does n't he like you?"

Edward told of the altercation which they had had in the baseball game.

"Oh, that's nothing," Blanchard said. "Durant's quick-tempered — terribly quick-tempered."

"He thinks I'm fresh, I guess," Edward answered. "He does n't care for me anyhow; I know that. When we meet he nods in a way that makes me tired. If a fellow can't smile a little when he nods, I'd rather have him cut me altogether."

"Well," Blanchard laughed, "you could n't expect Durant to care for you very much, could you?"

At that there was the questioning, hurt look in Edward's eyes that always amused and touched the older boy.

"I don't see why he should hate me," said Edward.

"He feels probably that you've been corrupted by evil associations," Blanchard replied. "When you were taken up more or less at the start by Jim Payne and Fred Bell and me, I guess that settled your prospects with Durant."

"Oh! Then you are not friends with him?"

"Oh, yes; we're friends." Blanchard volunteered no explanation.

"Do you know a fellow called Shelly?" Edward asked. "A big fellow, sort of fat-faced and good-natured?"

"I certainly do. What about him?"

"He's a good fellow, I think."

Edward described the episode of the pocket-mirror, and Blanchard was convulsed with laughter.

"What's the matter?" Edward asked in surprise.

“Oh, nothing. I was only thinking, if you did that to Tom Sheldon — ”

“Was that Sheldon, the crew captain?”

“The same. Can you blame fellows for saying you ’re fresh?”

Edward looked confused; then he said, “Well, I don’t care. It was the only thing to do.”

Blanchard laughed again and patting him on the back, said, “You ’re a great kid, Ned.”

Anyway that little talk put Edward into good spirits; and the next day he was writing to his brother at St. John’s as follows: —

“DEAR CHARLEY, — I ought to have written to you before this, but I have been so busy; there has been so much going on. I asked Mother to send you my letters. I guess the joke is on me all right. I thought that by coming here I should be getting away from your influence, but it does n’t seem to be the least use. They all think that because I’m your brother I must be some good, and they don’t treat me like a new kid at all. Blanch-

ard calls me Ned, and I'm calling him Guy now, and pretty soon I guess I will try calling him Blanche. He is a corker. He says I'll make the first Pithians" (he had n't yet learned how to spell it), "and maybe the School eleven. He and Fred Bell and Jim Payne have the finest crowd here; they are all dandy fellows, and although they're Sixth Formers and I'm only in the Fourth, I know them all pretty well already. The Fourth Form had a meeting yesterday and elected me President.

"We had a little baseball game here — the Fourth against the Sixth. They licked us, fifteen to seven, but it was pretty good fun. I caught for the Fourth and surprised myself and everybody else by getting a home run off Bell. He won't let any St. John's man do a thing like that, though, in a real game.

"Don't I wish I could make the School eleven and buck up against you! I bet I could nail you on one of those dashes they tell me so much about; I bet I would give you an ugly toss.

"I guess St. John's is a pretty fair school, but it is n't in it with St. Timothy's.

"Affectionately,
"NED."

After a few days there came this reply:—

"DEAR KID,— Of course I am glad to hear that you are having a good time and getting on all right; but when I think you might be having just as good a time here and getting on just as well, it makes me tired. The best thing that I know about your school is that they are doing so well by you.

"Is there really any chance of your making the St. Timothy's eleven? I hoped that this year we should find it would be a contest, at least.

"You might remember me to Blanchard and Bell and Payne sometime. I have run up against them, and they are mighty good fellows. Funny they should n't have come to St. John's.

"Affectionately,
"CHARLEY."

Edward transmitted these messages.

"We'll stand him on his head for that," said Blanchard. "Tell him I said so."

Gradually, from observation and from the gossip of the old boys, of Lawrence and others, Edward began to understand what Blanchard had meant by his remarks about Durant. It was apparent that Durant had his own faction in the School, and was jealous of the larger and more influential one led by Blanchard, into which Edward had been adopted. Moreover, Durant had been a candidate for the captaincy of the School eleven and had lost to Blanchard by a narrow margin of votes; with his quick, hot temper he had never quite won the confidence of the fellows as Blanchard had done.

He had been bitterly disappointed by the defeat and had ever since maintained a rather distant manner toward the boy who had frustrated his ambition. So it was natural enough that any protégé of Blanchard's should not advance far into Durant's favor.

Yet Edward could not help admiring Dur-

ant. "I guess he can do things; I guess he can do just about anything he wants to," Edward thought one day as he sat in chapel and looked across the aisle at Durant's resolute, fine profile and handsome head.

He was destined, he knew, to find out how well Durant could play football, and he did not relish that prospect. It was not so much that he shrank from a test which would demonstrate his own inferiority as that he dreaded the encounter with Durant's sharp tongue; he felt sure that in the heat of the contest his opponent would become ugly. He expected to have jeering, sneering things said to him all through the game; to be called, "Pishaw," a nickname which he hated; to hear slurring remarks about his St. John's affiliations, about his brother.

But his apprehensions proved groundless. Durant disdained stooping to such methods to gall and irritate an opponent; he might say ugly things in a flare-up of temper, but not by premeditation; he played the game as a gentleman. Although he took a keen satisfac-

tion in shoving Edward round and opening up big holes through him, he abstained from unpleasant remarks.

Tom Sheldon was also on the Corinthian team, big, active, and good-natured; once he burst through when Edward had started to run with the ball and bore him to the earth. Then as he lay on him, he tried to force the ball from his grasp and murmured cajolingly, —

“Let me take care of it for you, Crashaw; go on; I’ll let you have it after the game.”

Edward hung on to it tighter — and liked Sheldon better than before.

Throughout the Pythian-Corinthian series Edward performed creditably; but he knew that the final victory of the Pythians was due to their supremacy elsewhere than at left tackle. He was afraid that on the School eleven left tackle would be assigned to Wallace, a Sixth Former and Durant’s intimate friend and room-mate; Wallace had played that position for the Corinthians. He had not shown himself to be especially strong, but he

had an advantage over Edward in age and experience.

Blanchard said the next day, "Well, Ned, it's a try-out between you and Wallace."

That was good news to Edward; so long as he could still make a fight for the place he was happy.

On the other hand, when it became apparent to Wallace that he was not to have the vacancy without a contest and that he might not have it at all, he could not quite hide his disappointment. For two years he had been a substitute on the team; and he had assumed that this autumn — his last chance — he would be subjected to no competition.

But he accepted the unpleasant necessity more philosophically and with a better grace than did Durant, who had a praiseworthy interest in his success. Durant grumbled a good deal; he said that Crashaw might be all right in a year or two, but that now he was too young and green.

About ten days before the St. John's game Durant went to Blanchard.

"I suppose it's none of my business, Guy," he began, "but it seems to me we'd stand a better chance if we played together in the line-up from now on just as we'll play against St. John's."

"I have n't been varying the line-up much," Blanchard replied. "Only at left tackle, where Wallace and Crashaw have been alternating."

"That's just the place. If you pick your man now and keep him there right along, he'll settle down to the position and play it better in the game."

"I picked the man to-day."

"I hope it's Wallace."

"I'm sorry to disappoint you. It's Crashaw."

Durant's face became glum. "I don't quite see why. Wallace is older, he's had more experience; I've played against them both. This is Wallace's last year, and I think he has a right to feel that he's earned his chance."

"Crashaw has football blood in him, and Wallace has n't. But Wallace will probably

get a chance in the game, because Crashaw's young and may not have the endurance."

Durant walked away in angry silence.

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Blanchard later, after telling Jim Payne about it. "Would n't I lean over backwards to give the preference to Durant's friend rather than to mine, if I could! I know he feels sore about not being captain; I think he might be generous enough to feel that I'd be generous. Anybody with half an eye can tell that Crashaw has Wallace beaten."

The next day Wallace, dropped to the second eleven, seemed to be displaying unwonted aggressiveness. He was pitted against Durant; twice when Edward took the ball and tried to rush through the hole that Durant was expected to open for him, Wallace tackled him for a loss.

After the second failure Blanchard went up to Durant and said quietly, —

"Harry, are you playing this game quite straight? You would n't let St. John's through you that way."

Durant flushed and looked sullen.

“Well, put Wallace against Crashaw if you don’t like the way I’m handling him,” he said.

“I can’t do that. Wallace needs practice in the position of left tackle, since he’s going to substitute for that. He can’t shift now and play right tackle.”

“Just the same, if you put him opposite Crashaw you’d soon find who was the better man.”

Blanchard turned away without replying.

Wallace himself, after the first disappointment, took the captain’s decision in a better spirit than that shown by his too loyal friend. He said one day to Edward, jokingly,—

“If you’ll kindly break an arm or a leg during the game, Crashaw, I’ll be much obliged.”

Edward laughed. “I hope they won’t want to pull me out for any other reason,” he answered.

Charles Crashaw wrote a facetious letter to Edward, saying that he appreciated St. Timothy’s effort to propitiate St. John’s by

putting a Crashaw on the team, but that it would n't help them a bit. "I suppose you and I will give each other several love-pats before the day is over," he ended.

Edward wrote in reply, "I guess I'm in the best position of any one on our team. I don't see that I can feel so very badly, however the game comes out. If we win, it will be great; and if we lose, it will be my brother's eleven that licked us."

At that Crashaw the elder felt a little ashamed of having been so consistently patronizing, and said to himself, "He's a good kid, Ned is. I hope he does well in the game."

Three days before the game, Wallace sprained his ankle so badly that there was no further hope of his playing at all. Edward was as sympathetic as any one with his misfortune; at the same time he thought that now at least Durant would be more friendly.

But if Wallace's accident had been carefully plotted for by Edward and Blanchard, Durant could hardly have had a more violent outburst.

“O yes, Wallace is out of it now,” he said. “Mighty hard luck, some fellows are good enough to say. If Wallace had been playing on the first, where he belonged, he’d have been as well now as anybody — and somebody else would have been out of the game.”

That was his first outburst; no doubt in his cooler moments he was ashamed of it, for he did not talk in such a strain again. But in those last days he had little to say to Edward, either on the field or at the training-table.

The game that year was to be played on St. Timothy’s ground. The night before, Edward went to bed in his alcove at half-past nine. The dormitory lights were put out at ten; by half-past ten all the boys except Edward were asleep.

He lay with his eyes closed, turning restlessly every few minutes to gain a position which would invite drowsiness, but all in vain. He heard Keating’s sleepy cough and inarticulate mumble in the next alcove, he heard Lawrence turn in his bed, he heard the chapel clock strike eleven and twelve and one.

By that time he was desperate; what sort of a game could he play if he did n't sleep? It was n't only that he would be tired out physically; suppose he mixed or forgot the signals; there were so many of them. He began running through them in his mind; and while he was doing that the chapel clock struck two. "Oh dear!" he sighed. He rolled over, stretched himself out on his face, — and when he awoke the light was streaming in over his alcove curtains.

At the breakfast table Blanchard said to him, "You're looking pretty fit. Have a good night?"

"Oh, fair."

Edward thought that so long as he looked well he would not give Blanchard anything to worry about.

It was n't easy to study that morning; however, in class the masters were all good-natured and helped him when he stumbled. He felt that on the part of every one, masters and boys, there was to-day a wish to make things especially comfortable for him; there was a

special thoughtfulness. Keating and Lawrence clung at his side, petting him at every turn. Even Durant pleased him by coming up during the morning recess and saying, "Well, Crashaw, how goes it?" And Wallace, limping on crutches, said to him, "Strong as a bull, I hope?"

But after the early luncheon which the eleven had at the training-table and while they were walking down to the field, Edward did not feel as strong as a bull. He was nervous and shaky, and afraid that Blanchard would notice it and become distrustful.

Suddenly there was the sound of wheels behind, and then a shout; and there, swinging down the long avenue under the bare elms, came the St. John's barge, drawn by four horses. The St. Timothy's boys stepped aside, — they were only a short distance from the athletic house, — and the barge swept by. Edward stood, waving his cap and searching with shining eyes.

"Ned! Ned!" cried a voice; and there was

his brother in the midst of them, waving at him.

In another moment the barge had stopped at the steps of the athletic house, and the St. John's fellows scrambled out and St. Timothy's ran up to welcome them. Edward was the first and had his brother by the hand; and when the next moment Blanchard came up, Charles, clinging to Edward, said, "Hello, Blanchard; I hear there's an awfully weak spot in your line."

Blanchard grinned.

"You'll make a mistake if you act on that idea," he replied.

There was a quarter of an hour before it would be time to dress, so the two Crashaw brothers went off by themselves; they found a sunny corner on the south side of the athletic house, and sat there with their backs against the wall.

One would hardly have taken them for brothers; Edward, the larger, heavier of the two, was round-faced, with softly moulded features, whereas Charles was wiry and had a

straight nose, a decisive mouth, a long chin ; only in their eyes were the boys alike, for in them was the same humorous, kindly look, the same quick intelligence.

It was a warm day for November.

"Going to be hot playing," said Charles.

"I guess so," said Edward.

"You're pretty successful here, are n't you?"

"Thanks to you, I've got a good start."

"Thanks to me, you ungrateful pup ! You've fixed me so that I don't know where I'm at. Suppose a year or two from now you're captain of St. Timothy's ; can I come up and root for St. John's with any pleasure ? And I certainly won't root for you. You've spoiled about half my fun."

"Oh, well." Edward chuckled. "Don't fret yourself about that, Charley. You know, I may never be captain."

"You've got to play this afternoon so that some day you will be. — And we'll lick you just the same."

"We're pretty good," Edward said. "Tell

me about this fellow Jackson that plays opposite me, Charley. What's the best way for me to play him?"

Charles smiled at the ingenuous question. "Would n't you like to know! He's a terror."

"Just the same, I'll bet he's as scared of me as I am of him."

"That's right; talk big; it will keep your courage up," teased Charles.

Then, perhaps because it made them both nervous, they turned from the subject of the game and talked of other things.

Charles looked at his watch. "Time for my fellows to get dressed. Blanchard will probably be wanting you too, Ned."

As they ascended the steps of the athletic house, they saw far up the road the St. Timothy's column advancing and heard it suddenly roll out a great cheer.

"Look, Ned, look!" Charles pointed excitedly. "There come our fellows!"

A procession of blue-bedecked barges broke through the St. Timothy's column and trundled down toward the field.

CHAPTER III

THE WEAK SPOT

JACKSON was a long, lean, sinewy fellow who overtopped Edward by three inches. In the first line-up he crouched, swinging his big-boned, rangy arms, and eying Edward with a deliberate and concentrated look somehow more menacing than his swinging arms and defiant posture. He was evidently not one who would lose his head or waste his energy. Edward in that first moment felt a sudden fear and resolved that he must gain self-confidence by overpowering his man at the start, — getting the jump on him.

In that he succeeded ; high-strung and well drilled in his position, he was more quickly awake to the game than his more phlegmatic opponent. From the very first he was putting every ounce of his strength into the play, and so long as he was holding his man, he did not

stop to consider how much strength Jackson might have in reserve.

Early in the half Edward broke through and tackled his brother, who had caught a punt and dodged the St. Timothy's end; he hurled Charles to the ground with a fury which drew the applause of cheers and laughter from St. Timothy's. It was all laughter a moment later when Edward helped Charles to rise and gravely gave him a condoling pat on the back.

The ball was on St. John's twenty-yard line, and Charles signalled for a run round left end. On the play Edward thrust Jackson aside and tackled the runner for a loss. St. John's had to kick, and Blanchard got the ball in the middle of the field.

A few moments later he called for Edward to take it, and Edward made a five-yard rush, Durant opening up the way.

"Great work, Ned, great work!" Blanchard cried. Sheldon, who was playing left guard, just beside Edward, gave him a jubilant hand and hauled him to his feet and his place in

the line-up. On the side-lines the St. Timothy's spectators were not unmindful of what Edward was doing; that rush had brought the ball close to the boundary, and Edward heard eager cries, "That's the way, Crashaw! Put it all over big brother now."

Edward was getting winded; still he thought nothing of that. It was probably just the excitement of the game, and as he panted between plays, he glanced at Charles; but Charles's face was serene; he moved about distributing whispered words and encouraging pats among his men; last of all he gave one to Jackson.

Jackson was not panting yet, but his eyes were burning now with an awakened fire and his long arms swung with an impatient nervousness. Edward, crouching opposite him, panting but exultant, was unaware of any change.

On the next play Blanchard let Edward take the ball again; but this time the boy was so anxious to get away quickly that he lost his feet and went down without even be-

ing tackled. He got up mortified ; the advantage which he had won the moment before was lost.

“Never mind, Ned,” said the captain, and gave the signal which meant that Edward should open up a hole for Jim Payne, the right half-back.

With all his force Edward launched himself at Jackson, but this time a moment too soon ; Jackson neatly evaded him and then plunged in and grabbing Payne round the waist began rushing him backwards ; the St. John’s eleven concentrated behind to help him, and Payne, shouting “Down ! Down !” was being slowly borne back towards his own goal.

The referee put a stop to that and called the ball down at the spot where Payne had been tackled.

Edward took his place with a strange superstitious fear ; had his luck turned ? He had started in too strongly perhaps—yet now Jackson was compelling him to keep up to that pace.

For St. Timothy's, Watts dropped back to kick; Edward braced himself to prevent Jackson from breaking through and blocking the punt. And again Edward was over-eager and charged too soon, — so that before he knew how it had happened, Jackson had flashed past him and was bearing down on the full-back, who sent the ball away just in time; it sailed barely beyond the reach of Jackson's upraised arms.

It was a good, successful kick, and in the satisfaction and relief which it occasioned, there were not many who thought of Edward's failure to perform his part; but he was chagrined enough by it. "Steady, now; steady!" he murmured to himself, as if he were a frightened horse that was getting beyond control.

For the rest of the half he fought it out with Jackson on even terms — just as the two elevens were fighting it out. He held his own, but with increasing difficulty, and it seemed to him that Jackson was growing stronger and stronger all the time. At the end of the half, with the score nothing to nothing, he felt as

exhausted as he might naturally feel at the end of a hard game. And Jackson, it was evident, had not yet begun to tire.

In the athletic house Edward doused his head with water and then lay on his back on the floor with his eyes closed. He wished that Blanchard would n't find it necessary to talk; he felt that what would do him most good would be to snatch five minutes' sleep. Oh, if he had not lost those precious hours during the night! But Blanchard came up and sat beside him, and assured him that he was playing splendidly, and that in the next half St. Timothy's would score.

Edward, without opening his eyes, smiled a weary assent.

"Now," Blanchard said, addressing the eleven, "I'll tell you what I want you to do, fellows. It's our kick-off this half, and we have the wind with us. We've got to keep St. John's from running the ball back; when they kick we must get the ball inside their forty-yard line. And then we're off for a touchdown. We can score in the first five

minutes, if every man plays for all that's in him. — Ned, I'll give you a chance to run with the ball; Durant's playing a bully game, opening up holes, and you ought to get through for your distance."

"I'll try," said Edward.

On the kick-off he was the first one down the field, and he tackled his brother, who caught the ball, before Charles had gone two yards. The St. Timothy's cheer inspirited him; he sprang up and went to his position with renewed confidence. Charles took instant revenge and sent Dale, his fullback, charging through Edward for five yards.

"Hold them, fellows, hold them," Blanchard urged on the next line-up.

And hold them they did, and St. John's kicked, and St. Timothy's got the ball just inside St. John's forty-yard line.

"What did I tell you, fellows?" cried Blanchard with elation. "Now we'll do the rest of the trick."

He made a beautiful forward pass to Cochran, the right end, and Cochrane gained ten

yards. Then Payne plunged through the centre for five yards.

“Only twenty-five more to go, fellows!” cried Blanchard. “Seven, fifty-three, six!”

That was Edward’s signal, and he rushed round behind Blanchard, receiving the ball as he passed. Head down, with Blanchard pushing him he plunged through the gap that Durant and Cochrane had opened up between them; a whitewashed line flew beneath his feet, and then he was thrown violently on his shoulder, and somehow as he fell the ball slipped away from him.

Dazed and breathless, he rose at last, to hear the joyous shouting from the St. John’s followers.

Durant was stamping about furiously and came up to him. “Oh, Butterfingers!” cried Durant. “How did you do it?”

Edward turned away sadly without answering. Charles Crashaw had heard the speech; he stood for a moment glaring at the boy who had reproached his brother. Then in the heat of his anger, he committed an error of

judgment; he drove the next attack against Durant, who had been playing the strongest game in the St. Timothy's line. The attack collapsed without gaining. Then Charles directed a play at Edward; Jackson opened up the hole and Dale rushed through for five yards.

"Stop them, Crashaw; you've got to stop them!" cried Durant passionately.

Charles Crashaw heard that too, and his eyes glittered.

Blanchard gave Edward a confiding pat on the shoulder. "All right, old man; all right," said Blanchard's quiet voice.

That generous confidence made Edward choke; he resolved to justify his captain's faith. The next time he made a good tackle; and again St. John's had to kick. The ball was St. Timothy's in the middle of the field.

They rushed it by a series of attacks to St. John's thirty-yard line. Edward had been getting into every play with all the strength that he had; and Blanchard had been driving his team without intermission.

Once Edward had been given the ball and had made a five-yard gain; he had been thrown pretty hard. Now he felt that exhaustion was coming over him again; he staggered and gasped, but he tried to keep back his gasps so that Jackson should not hear. On the thirty-yard line Blanchard called for Durant to take the ball and go through Jackson. In the play Edward was the fraction of a second slow; Jackson charged him, thrust him aside, and hurled Durant to the ground for a loss.

“You’ve got to block your man, Crashaw!” Durant exclaimed wrathfully when he got to his feet.

The elder Crashaw was standing right there, and his temper flared. “You must think nobody can ever tackle you!” he sneered.

“Signal!” shouted Blanchard; and Durant and Edward hurried to their places.

That was the last signal that Blanchard gave. Sayre, the centre, snapped the ball back poorly, and as Blanchard was delayed getting his hands on it, Williams, the big St. John’s guard, burst through and fell on him.

Williams got up all right, but Blanchard lay on the ground. The team gathered round him; Durant knelt and lifted his head.

"Don't," said Blanchard, "I'm all right. Don't bother."

His face was pale and he was gritting his teeth, but he sat up. Dr. Vincent, the school physician, had hurried out on the field.

"It's my left knee," Blanchard said to him. "Wrenched it — but I'll be able to go on in a moment."

The doctor turned down the boy's stocking.

"No more football for you to-day," he said. "It's out of the question."

"Wait; I'll show you. Give me a hand." They helped Blanchard to his feet and he took a hobbling step. He stopped then, with a painful smile.

"I guess you're right, Doctor; it's no use. Durant, will you be captain? — Play hard, fellows; you can lick them."

Durant and the doctor assisted him to the side-line, while St. John's and St. Timothy's alike applauded him. Carberry, his substitute,

ran out and began limbering up and making practice passes with the ball. Blanchard stretched himself on a blanket on the ground and then drew Durant's head down close to his.

"You're captain now, and it's all your game, Harry," he said. "There's just one thing; I believe young Crashaw will play better if you don't scold him."

"I'll try to act like a captain," Durant answered.

The game went on; Carberry at quarterback was eager and energetic, but his judgment was not always good and his skill was limited. On the very first play Durant had him change the signal; then Jim Payne took the ball and fought his way through to St. John's twenty-yard line. There, after three furious scrimmages, in all of which Edward was buried deep, St. Timothy's were held and lost the ball.

For St. John's, Charles Crashaw made an end run of fifteen yards and then sent Dale through Edward for ten yards; once more the ball was in neutral territory, and St. John's

on the side-lines were shouting in an ecstasy of relief. Edward stood after that last rush with his hands on his knees, getting his breath.

"All right, Crashaw." It was Durant's voice, strangely encouraging instead of sharp and critical. "All right." And Durant clapped him on the shoulder just as Blanchard had done.

Charles Crashaw paused to survey his men and the enemy. There was Jackson, dishevelled, dirty, panting, but in the full flush of his strength; opposite him stood Edward, with his face white and drawn, betraying exhaustion and suffering. Charles looked along the line. His jocular word to Blanchard before the game had come true. He had found St. Timothy's weak spot.

There were only a few minutes left before time would be called. Charles began to drive every play against his brother. First it would be Carter, with Charles blocking off, who would dash through the hole that Jackson opened. Then it would be Dale, the fullback. Then it would be Rose, the left tackle.

But whoever it was, he always found the hole awaiting him; Jackson always had Edward out of the way, and Carberry, striving to stop the gap, never succeeded in at once pulling the runner down.

"I'll try to help you," Sheldon breathed twice in Edward's ear. "If you can't get him, turn him in this way."

But it was sufficiently apparent that with Williams opposite him Sheldon already had his hands more than full. Steadily, ruthlessly St. John's proceeded up the field, hammering the necessary gains each time through the weak spot.

The St. John's cheering grew more intense, the St. Timothy's cheering more desperate. After every play Durant ran up to Edward, clapped him encouragingly on the back, cried cheerfully, "You can hold them, Ned!" He had never called Edward anything but Crashaw before.

Edward turned away dumbly. He was very tired — too tired to speak. He was grateful to Durant, but he did not much care now what

was said to him. If they would only give him a rest for one play; perhaps then he could stop the next one. Once his eyes met his brother's, and though he was unconscious of it there was in them a beseeching look.

Charles hesitated a moment that time before giving the signal; then he cried it out sharply and sent Rose crashing through Edward for five yards.

"Lie still and take time out after the play, Ned." Durant whispered this in his ear. "Save your strength all you can."

But the few seconds allowed for that did not seem to be of any value.

Ten consecutive rushes through Edward had brought the ball to St. Timothy's ten-yard line.

"Hold them, fellows; you've got to hold them!" cried Durant.

"Hold them, St. Timothy's; hold them, St. Timothy's!" shouted the boys on the nearer side-line. "Touchdown! Touchdown! Touchdown!" clamored incessantly the crowd on the farther side-line.

Edward crouched for the play. He knew it would come at him ; he felt a bitter resentment against Charles for battering him in this way, driving every play at him, humiliating him so. Why could n't he go at some one else for a change ? It was n't fair, it —

He charged with all his might, and with head down tackled some one who was plunging past Jackson. They fell hard, and Edward hugged his man with his last desperate strength ; this time at least he had done his duty, this time they had made no gain.

Then as the others got up, the boy whom he was clasping said in a muffled voice, half-appealing, half-humorous, "It's only me, Ned." And Edward saw that it was his brother Charles whom he had tackled, and that Charles did not have the ball. Rose had carried it through to the five-yard line, and all St. John's were leaping and waving blue flags and shouting.

Charles rose and looked at his brother with a smile more wistful than triumphant. He glanced at the other St. Timothy's players ;

they were all blown and anxious-eyed, but none of them looked as Edward did, none had that white circle round the mouth, none seemed so exhausted and distressed.

“Now then, fellows, get across this time,” Charles cried in his determined voice. “Sixty-three, seven !”

Then they went through Edward for the touchdown.

Three minutes after, Dale had kicked the goal, making the score six to nothing for St. John's ; the game was over.

Charles did not have a chance then to speak to Edward. The St. John's boys rushed upon the field ; they massed round their captain and exalted him on their shoulders, and then ran with him to the athletic house. He was far less happy than any of those who bore him.

In the shower-room he found himself standing next to Durant.

“Why did n't you put a substitute in for my brother towards the end ?” he asked sharply.

“The only substitute there was sprained his ankle three days ago,” Durant replied. “We

might have put young Stokes in, but that would n't have done any good. You'd have gone through him more easily than through your brother."

"Ned must have been overtrained."

"I should n't wonder. He was plucky, though. When he gets his growth and his endurance he'll be all right. I guess he blames himself more than anybody else does."

Other players entered the bath-room, but Edward was not among them. Charles went into the dressing-room and rubbed himself down; at the farther end of the room he saw Edward half undressed, sitting on a bench with his chin in his hands. A fellow on crutches stood by him.

"You cheer up, Crashaw," this person was saying. "I tell you, that Jackson fellow was fierce—I don't believe anybody could have stood up under the battering they gave you. I think you did mighty well to hold him as long as you did. Everybody thinks so too. You're young yet; in a year or two you'll give St. John's what for."

"I can't help feeling that if you 'd been in there instead of me, Wallace—"

"Now cut that right out," said Wallace, and he laid his hand on the boy's bare shoulder.

Charles moved up near them. The older-brother habit of authority asserted itself.

"Ned," he said, "you 'd better go in and take your bath; you 'll catch cold."

Edward looked up, saw that it was Charles, and meekly obeyed.

"He 's taking it pretty hard," said the lame fellow.

"It 's good of you to try to make it easy," said Charles.

"Oh, well." Wallace lingered as if wanting to add something; then he turned on his crutches and swung out of the door.

Charles Crashaw waited for his brother. When Edward was dressed, Charles took him by the arm and said, "We 'll go for a little walk up the road — till the barge comes along and takes me in."

Outside, they came upon Blanchard, wrapped in a blanket and seated in a carriage.

"Congratulate you, Crashaw," he said, putting out his hand to Charles.

Edward stood by with downcast eyes.

"It's the hardest luck you got hurt; I'm awfully sorry," said Charles.

"It was a chump thing for me to do." Blanchard glanced kindly at the younger brother. "Just my own clumsiness. When I ought to have stayed and backed Ned up in the defence — instead of leaving him to go it alone."

Edward raised his eyes; there were tears in them.

"I can't tell you how I feel, Guy," he said; his lips quivered, and he turned quickly away.

Charles pressed Blanchard's hand. "Thank you, ever so much," he said. Then he hurried after his brother.

They walked together for a while in silence.

"Kid," said Charles, when they had turned away from the field into the avenue of elms, "you know, I did n't enjoy winning this game very much."

"Why not?"

"Ah, you know why, Ned!" He put his arm round his brother's waist. "It almost made me cry — to keep pounding you when you were all played out. You don't know how I wanted to try it somewhere else — especially when it came to striking for the touchdown. Oh, I'd have given anything to make it through Durant instead of you! But I did n't dare to take the chance, Ned. I knew that everywhere else your line was strong — and it was up to me to win that game for St. John's. I'm sorry."

"It's all right, Charley. I suppose I'm selfish to feel the least bit sore about it. Your last year at St. John's and being captain — of course you — I ought almost to be glad you won. But I'm sorry for Blanchard! If only I had n't lost it —!"

"Nobody blames you. Jackson really is a wonder. You held him mighty well, until your strength gave out."

"If I only thought so!"

"Everybody else thinks so. The way those St. Timothy's fellows talk about you — it

makes me feel they're just as good as St. John's."

"They're the best ever—if that's what you mean."

"Kid," said Charles, drawing him close, "it does me good to see you smile again."

Behind them came the St. John's barge at a gallop. It slowed up, and the boys in it called to Charles to climb aboard.

"Good-by, Ned," he said, and gave a lingering squeeze to his brother's hand.

Jackson reached a hand down from the barge.

"Crashaw," he said. "Just to show there's no hard feeling."

Edward looked up at him; he was not at all savage in appearance now; he was laughing and his eyes were kind.

"None at all," said Edward, and he grasped Jackson's hand.

Then the barge rolled away. Edward took off his cap and waved a farewell to his brother.

When he turned, the first golden streaks of the sunset were shining beyond the chapel

tower. He looked toward them with blurred eyes. There was a crowning radiance to his afternoon; through his failure and defeat he had come to know Wallace and Durant and Sheldon and Blanchard — yes, even his own brother — all that was best in them, and to care for them all as perhaps he might never otherwise have cared.

“If I could ever be big enough to treat some other poor kid the way they’ve treated me!” he thought.

CHAPTER IV

IN VACATION

IT was well enough to have the knowledge that the fellows for whom one most cared did not despise one for one's weakness; but for a long time soreness lingered in Edward's heart. He felt that he had been treated more generously than he deserved.

"I was nothing but a quitter," he thought to himself moodily, time and again. He would stop to hold debates with himself about it while he was dressing, while he was taking a bath; the sight of his own muscles seemed particularly to exasperate him. "*You* played out, you big beef!" Thus at such moments he would address himself. "You lay down; that's all there was to it."

Jackson became a mere ordinary boy in retrospect, no such giant of strength and endurance after all. And when Edward's indulgent side pleaded the memory of his sleepless night

as an excuse, the prosecutor who had his inner ear scathingly replied, " Yes, and why could n't you sleep? It was because you were scared before the game. You lay down before ever it began. You're a quitter; that's all you are. Excusing yourself because you were tired!"

With this morbid idea implanted in his mind, Edward was for some days quite morose. In his letter about the game to his mother he did not go into details; he said that he himself played very badly and that was why St. Timothy's lost, but that Charles had played very well, and it was rather a pity that she and his father could n't have been there to see Charles play; they would n't have got much satisfaction out of watching *him*.

The tone of the letter was so disconsolate that his mother answered it at once; she said Charles's account did not coincide with his at all, for Charles had written that Edward had done splendidly, except that he had got rather tired towards the end — which was only natural in one so young; Mrs. Crashaw ended her

letter by advising her son that there were other things in the world besides football games, and it was bad to take one's defeats, or victories either, for that matter, so intensely.

Edward felt that this was good advice, but that after all she did n't and could n't understand ; it was n't a matter of the defeat or the victory, it was a matter of his own character. He was a "quitter," and he felt that Charles in his heart of hearts, and in spite of the brotherly sympathy and affection which had done so much to tide him over the first bad hour, knew it and was ashamed. He felt that Charles must be in a measure glad now that he had not come to St. John's. Those were the thoughts that burnt deepest. There had never been anything of the quitter in Charles.

Edward cheered up after a time, of course, but the experience had left its scar. There was no other outdoor activity now into which he could plunge and so shake off the persistent self-reproach ; there was no way of

vindicating his spirit. Here he was, — a new boy who had had a phenomenal success at the start, who had been elected president of his form and taken up by the best of the older fellows — and now he had collapsed like a pricked bubble!

Snow and ice came soon, and then hockey was the sport that invited the attention of the boys. But Edward was a “duffer” at hockey — to the surprise and chagrin of those who had seen his brother play the year before on the St. John’s team.

“Funny you don’t play better,” said Lawrence to him one day. “Your brother’s a perfect whirlwind on skates.”

“I know,” said Edward. “I never seemed to get the knack.”

Because they liked him so much, and were always glad to have him round, his friends would never leave him out when they were choosing up sides; usually they put him in to guard the goal, an unexciting position which he filled acceptably enough.

Now and then one of the others, winded by

the more active play, would relieve him, and he would take his place among the forwards, and sometimes get his stick on the rubber disk and run with it clumsily a little way, but he never kept it long. It seemed as if anybody could get it away from him — even a midget like young Vance. Even Keating, in spite of his toeing in and his tendency to walk on his ankle-bones, skated better than Edward.

It was endlessly humiliating — and yet it was all rather good fun ; and Edward found himself just as eager each day for that scrub game as he had ever been for the football or baseball games in which he more noticeably shone.

Keeping goal, he had plenty of opportunity to watch the crack hockey-players, who were having their practice near by ; Bell and Payne and Durant and Sheldon were the best of them. Blanchard was temporarily out of the game on account of his injured knee, but hoped to be all right after the Christmas vacation, and able to take part in the Pythian-

Corinthian matches and the game with St. John's.

"He's the best scorer we have," Lawrence said to Edward. "And I guess your brother is the best for St. John's. I saw the game last year, and the way those two played was enough to scare you; they're terribly aggressive. I thought one of 'em would be knocked out sure."

"Charles handles himself pretty well," Edward replied. "He's never yet been knocked out in football or anything."

Nevertheless when, a week later, Edward went home for the Christmas vacation, he found his brother, who had preceded him by a day, nursing a badly discolored eye and a sprained thumb.

"Gee, Charley, but you're a mess!" were Edward's first words. "What have you been doing to yourself?"

"Oh, just got smashed up a little in the last hockey practice. I don't suppose I can go to any parties looking like this." Charles examined himself ruefully in the glass. "Are

they going to put you on the St. Timothy's hockey team, Ned — so that I can go for you again?"

"You need n't have asked that," said Edward.

Something in his voice caused Charles to turn from the mirror where he had been examining his face. He saw the injured look in Edward's eyes, the flush on his cheeks, and he said with quick compunction, —

"I did n't think; I ought not to have jollied you there. But honestly, I wondered if you were getting on to hockey any better than you used to."

"No. I'm as much a chump as ever. I go out and play with little kids, and they stick me in to keep goal, and I fall all over myself when anybody comes at me with the puck. I'll be glad when baseball begins again; I think that's one thing anyway I can do."

"You'd better take up rowing instead of baseball; you're just the build for it, and it's a great deal more fun."

“How do you know?” Edward laughed. “You never played ball enough to find out.”

“Well, you try rowing; you’ll see. I’ve got a new toy I want to show you; I’ll let you play with it maybe if you’re good. Come up to my room and see it.”

Charles’s room had always had a fascination for the younger brother. It was at least twice as large as Edward’s own, and as Charles had grown and waxed great in athletic prowess and ambition he had equipped it more and more as a gymnasium.

Only within the last year or two had he admitted Edward into it on equal terms; before that, it had been chiefly as an admiring spectator that Edward had come and had been received; and not until Charles had finished showing off with his Indian clubs and his punching-bag and his horizontal bar, — on which he believed he could do the giant swing if the ceiling were high enough to let him, — not until he had given a display of his superior attainments would he condescend to

let Edward try the apparatus and to instruct him.

But the time had come at last when Edward was privileged to walk in and make use of the place just as if it were his own gymnasium; when Charles became indeed shy of putting on the boxing-gloves and standing up to him; and when, if Charles taunted Edward with his inferiority on the horizontal bar, Edward could reply by putting the fifty-pound dumb-bell straight up from his shoulder and saying, —

“Come on; let’s see you do this.”

The room looked the same as when Edward had last seen it, with the punching-bag suspended in the middle, the foils and boxing-gloves hung on the walls, the chest-weights by the head of the bed, and the trophies, the medals and cups on the mantel-piece; it was all the same except for one quite noticeable addition.

That was a rowing-machine, of the kind that Edward had seen in the gymnasium at St. Timothy’s. There was the little sliding seat

that ran in steel grooves, there was the foot-rest with the toe-straps — all constructed just as they would be in a racing shell ; there was an oar which fitted into the socket of a swivel, and pressed, as one pulled, against an air-cushion.

“I wrote to father and asked him to have it set up for me,” Charles explained. “You see, I’ll be playing hockey a good deal next term and won’t get as much rowing practice in the gym as some of the other fellows. But this will help me to keep even with them ; I can use it in the Easter vacation, too. I’ll coach you if you want me to, Ned.”

“They don’t let anybody use these things in our gymnasium except the crew men,” said Edward. “And they have n’t begun practising yet — so I’ve never seen the thing work. I always wanted to try one.”

He sat down on the sliding seat, and picking up the oar began shooting back and forth.

“Oh shucks, you don’t know the first thing about it. Why, you begin by bending your back like a bow one way and end up by bend-

ing it like a bow in the other! I'll have to show you."

"Of course I can't row in proper form with all my clothes on," said Edward. "I'll bet I could soon learn. I don't believe it's in it with baseball, so far as skill goes."

"Ho, isn't it! You have to be born to do it — or else you can never really learn."

"Are you a born oarsman?"

"Well, more or less." Charles disliked having to make this personal application of the principle. "I'll tell you, Ned, the real reason why I wanted this thing. It looks as if they'd put me in to stroke the crew this year; there's nobody else who's right for the place in weight and so on. It's important that a stroke should have a wonderful sense of time — so that he should know instinctively when he's rowing thirty-two strokes to the minute and when he's rowing thirty-four, and so that he should be able to keep the pace even and not be hitting it up and then dropping it again. Now I don't know how good I may be at that; and I thought if I could sit here and row every day,

with a clock in front of me, and count the strokes and watch the second hand, I'd get the sense of time after a while. Don't you think there's something in that?"

"You're a great fellow for using your head and thinking things out, aren't you, Charley?" Edward gave his brother a look of admiration. "I should never have thought of doing a thing like that — being so thorough. No wonder they made you captain at St. John's!"

"Oh, you learn to use your head as you grow older," Charles said graciously. "And I'll tell you what I'll do this vacation; I'll teach you the St. John's stroke. It's the same as St. Timothy's, so it won't be giving away any secrets. And maybe some day you'll develop into an oarsman."

Edward felt grateful, and Charles felt that he had made amends for the jeer which had touched his brother in a sensitive spot. Each day he put Edward to work on the rowing-machine, and before the vacation was over he had quite fired him with zeal for this new sport.

"I really think you have the makings of a good oar," Charles said one day toward the end. "When you go back to St. Timothy's, you start right in and train with the crew. I believe you can make it."

"If I make the crew I can't play baseball," objected Edward.

"If you can make the crew I don't see why you should want to play baseball," replied Charles.

"Because it's so much more fun."

"You can't tell how much fun rowing is from simply practising on a machine. It's not a fair test. Besides, Ned, think what sport it would be for us to buck up against each other in a race. You'd have your chance maybe to get your revenge."

"That would be great, wouldn't it!" Edward rose from the sliding seat and took his brother gently by the neck. "I'd like to help lick you once before you leave that bum school."

Sometimes Mrs. Crashaw climbed the stairs to see what the boys were about; she could not

understand the fascination of the rowing-machine, and after watching Edward working on it a while and hearing Charles's comments, such as, "Don't rush your slide! Don't swing crooked! Don't hang at the full reach!" she would be apt to say, "Dear me, but you're two ridiculous boys!"

Yet they liked to have her around to say that, and they were delighted one day when she asked to be allowed to row on the machine herself; they whooped with joy at her efforts to pull the oar and slide at the same time.

Another day their father came up, and he too expressed a desire to show what sort of an oarsman he was; he took off his coat and shoved himself back and forth, and pulled so hard that the perspiration came on his forehead.

"I guess you might have been something of an athlete if only you'd gone to boarding-school when you were young," was Charles's condescending comment.

"You get some power into your stroke, but you have n't any form," added Edward.

“A race between you and mother might be quite exciting,” said Charles.

“Young man,” rejoined Mr. Crashaw with dignity, “I am accustomed to rowing in real water in a real boat, — man’s size, too, — a rowboat or a dory, and if ever you want to take me on in a contest of that sort — ”

“We got a rise out of him all right,” Charles murmured quite audibly to Edward.

“Humph!” said Mr. Crashaw. “Humph!” And he withheld his amused smile until he was safely on the stairs.

It pleased Charles at the end of his vacation to have his mother say when she was bidding him good-bye: —

“Edward has told me what a good brother you’ve been to him during these holidays, dear. He thinks you were fine to give up so much time to his rowing. Of course I don’t understand such things; but when Edward admires you so and is so grateful, it makes me proud of both my boys. You used to be rather domineering and dictatorial with Edward; you’re ever so much nicer with him now.”

Charles was touched by that, but he did n't care to show it. "Oh, don't you and Edward fool yourselves," he said airily. "I've been teaching him to row just the way you'd fatten a pig for killing."

His mother laughed and kissed him.

CHAPTER V

THE CAPTAIN OF THE CREW

A WEEK after the opening of the mid-winter term at St. Timothy's, Edward began training with the candidates for the Pythian crew. The number of them varied with the weather; if that was good and the skating was fine, there would be only a dozen or fifteen boys at work in the gymnasium; whereas on stormy afternoons there might be a hundred, of whom at least half considered themselves crew candidates.

Edward was one of the most constant, and was rewarded after a while for his constancy, for on a particularly lean day Tom Sheldon, the captain, said to him, —

“I’ve got to play hockey this afternoon, and most of the fellows will be doing that too; will you run the squad, Crashaw?”

Running the squad meant leading them in the pulling of chest-weights, stroking and

coaching them on the rowing-machines, and afterwards taking them for a mile trot down the road. It was quite like being captain, and though Edward felt as he led his meagre band that perhaps not one of them would ever make the crew, he enjoyed being given a position of such responsibility.

As for Sheldon, with all his attractive qualities, he had not much feeling of responsibility. He was a most easy-going, mentally indolent boy, who was nominally a Sixth Former but who was really repeating about half his studies with the Fifth; he had been elected captain of the Pythian crew and also of the School crew by virtue of being the best oar in St. Timothy's and not because he had ever demonstrated any notable capacity for leadership.

Of the four members of the crew of the year before who had returned to the School, Cochrane and Quimby were Fifth Formers and would naturally have been passed over in the election of a captain; but Edward could not help thinking it strange that Sheldon had been preferred to Durant, who

was obviously a person of greater driving power.

Blanchard offered an explanation when Edward asked him about it.

“Sheldon was the best oar in the boat and pulled harder than anybody else in the race, so I guess the fellows thought he deserved the captaincy,” said Blanchard. “Besides, he’s more generally popular than Harry Durant; I guess Harry’s soreness over the football election hurt him when it came to electing a crew captain.”

If it had not been for Mr. Burns, the gymnasium instructor, who gave them some patient coaching, the Pythian crew candidates would have been rather neglected. On the crowded days Sheldon seemed both bewildered and indifferent; he would pick out six or eight of the biggest fellows and say, “Come on; fall in;” and with them he would do chest-weights and row on the machines, leaving all the others to their own devices.

It was quite a different method that Cole, the captain of the Corinthians, pursued. Cole

had no great strength or skill as an oarsman, but he was most painstaking; and when he was not himself actively pulling weights or rowing, he was standing by, watching and criticizing and trying to teach the others—even the most unpromising. But when Sheldon had had enough of the weights and the rowing-machines, he would pick out some one—usually Edward—and say, “You run the rest of the squad to-day.”

Then he would go upstairs, where were the flying rings and horizontal bars and all the rest of the gymnasium apparatus; and there he would disport himself, wrestling with some other big fellow on a mattress, or sailing up and down the room on the rings, or shinning up the rope to the ceiling, or “skinning the cat” on the horizontal bar.

He was the hero in the gymnasium of all the little kids, and as he moved about performing his various stunts he was always attended by a group of small persons whose bare arms and legs showed goose-flesh, but who preferred to shiver and look on at such

wonderful feats rather than engage in the dull inferior exercise within their powers.

Being so simple-minded and good-natured, Sheldon enjoyed the homage of the children; he would perform for them unceasingly.

Late one afternoon, when Edward had dressed and was about to leave the building, he paused in the doorway; at one side stood Mr. Barclay and Mr. Elwood; they did not notice Edward, for they were absorbed in watching Sheldon—as was nearly every one on the floor of the gymnasium.

At the farther end of the room two ladders, inclined toward each other, rose almost to the ceiling and were connected at the top by a horizontal ladder. Sheldon was going up the inside of one of the slanting ladders—not going up hand over hand, but jerking himself up with both hands simultaneously, jumping as it were in air from rung to rung. He was doing it very fast; the loud *slap, slap* of his hands, as they caught and then let go, resounded explosively in the silent room.

He reached a height from which to fall

would be serious. Edward looked on with bated breath and wished that Sheldon would shift to the safer method, hand over hand; that in itself for such a distance was hard enough.

But Sheldon did not change; he went springing on indefatigably right up to the top, and when he had reached it the spectators broke out into clapping. He paused there only long enough to turn so that he faced the other inclined ladder; then he leaped towards it, rung by rung, and came down it rapidly in the same fashion. When he dropped to the floor, he turned a handspring on a mattress, came up, and blew a kiss to the admiring and applauding youngsters.

Edward heard Mr. Barclay say to Mr. Elwood, "He's a wonderful athlete; pity he has n't any brains."

Perhaps that was true, thought Edward — yet he wished he were able to do that! And having witnessed such a performance, he was considerably more sympathetic with Sheldon's casual treatment of the crew candidates. To

one who could do such brilliant things, the work on the rowing-machines and chest-weights must seem pretty dull. Besides, Edward thought that probably after the hockey season was over Sheldon would take his duties as captain more seriously.

There would no doubt be a general reorganization then; for there were some good oarsmen among the hockey players who would then make their first appearance. And Edward found it especially easy to make excuses for Sheldon—as did almost every one who knew him.

Meanwhile, Edward trained persistently, enjoying his intervals of authority and at other times performing the exercises with faithfulness if not always with zest. It helped a good deal when Mr. Burns said just what Charles had said earlier: “You have the makings of a good oar in you, Crashaw.”

Mr. Burns spoke even more enthusiastically than that to Sheldon; and that was one reason why Sheldon picked Edward out for leader of the squad.

Jim Payne, the captain of the baseball nine, became apprehensive. He said to Edward one day, —

“It’s all right for you to train with the crew these winter months and get strong — but don’t forget; you’re to play baseball in the spring.”

“Oh,” Edward laughed, “spring is a long way off.”

“I know it, but we have to look ahead,” said Payne. “I’m counting on you.”

Edward evaded an answer. He could not help knowing now that in all probability he could make the first Pythian crew and that he might even win a seat in the School boat. If he could do that! He was n’t yet convinced that rowing was more fun than baseball, — though perhaps when one actually got out on the water it might prove so, — but whether it was or not, if the chance to row against his brother was offered him he meant to take it.

He wrote often to Charles of the progress that he was making, and Charles answered with messages of encouragement. As for him-

self, he said that he had not had much time to give to rowing since his return to St. John's; he had been getting ready for the hockey game, in which, he said, they expected to push St. Timothy's all round the rink.

Whether that was a well-founded vaunt or not, Edward had little opportunity of judging. He sometimes wished he could get into one of the scrub hockey games again with Keating and Lawrence and Vance and the others; they were talking about them all the time at the table, and urging Edward to drop his rowing once in a while and tend goal for them.

"You have such fine big feet for it," Lawrence said. "There's nobody else with such big feet."

"Besides," said Keating, "it is n't good for you to stay shut up in the stuffy gymnasium when you could be out in the open air."

"I take a run outdoors every day," Edward replied.

Indeed when he was in charge of the squad, he made those runs so long and vigorous that

some of the boys protested. He took them bare-legged across fields when the snow was ankle-deep; he spurred them up icy slopes; on thawy days he splashed them along muddy roads until they were all a sorry-looking sight.

They complained that they were n't out for cross-country runs, that he was giving them chilblains, and that they did n't see what this sort of treatment had to do with rowing anyway.

"Toughens you up," said Edward, with a cheerful grin. "Come on; you're getting husky."

He was having a pretty good time out of it; yet there were moments when he could not help envying other boys. When in the late afternoon, on the run home to the gymnasium, he passed the pond where the hockey players were flying about on the ice, with the ringing rush of the skates and the clashing scrimmage of the sticks, what he was doing seemed stupid and plodding by comparison.

He had an eye for the picturesqueness and the grace of the skaters; he liked to see a line

of them sweep down the ice with that fine vigorous singing of their skates, and then sharply wheel on a flank movement as some daring and deft opponent twitched aside the puck they were pursuing. It was all so brisk and spirited and changing, that it made the steady pull on the chest-weights and rowing-machines and the jog-trot on the empty roads seem monotonous.

The sun setting beyond the pines which fringed the shore burnished the ice with warm bronze and golden tints; on two afternoons Edward thought he had never seen anything more gorgeous than that glow with all those swift and agile figures flashing about in it, sparkling with their own bright colors, their red jerseys and white sweaters and caps of different hues. He was sure then that to play hockey as the School team played it, as Charles played it, must give one the greatest joy, the most triumphant feeling in life; he was more than ever sure that it must be wonderful to be Charles!

On the morning of Washington's Birthday, Edward was tobogganing with Lawrence and

Keating and a number of other Fourth Formers on Roup's Hill, which was half a mile from the School, on the road to town.

It was a clear, cold morning ; there was a hard crust on the snow all the way down the long slope to the alder-fringed creek ; there were gleaming thank-you-ma'ams over which the toboggans leaped, and frozen pools over which they skimmed ; the holiday spirit was in all the boys ; they shouted as they flew down the hill, and from the bottom they raced eagerly up again. Off in the distance they could see the pond where other fellows were skating, and beyond that the rink, empty of skaters, shining with its fresh ice and waiting for the contest of the afternoon.

Charles had written to Edward that the St. John's hockey team were coming over by the nine o'clock train to have luncheon with the St. Timothy's team before the game ; so, after half-past eleven, when the nine o'clock train was due to arrive, Edward abandoned his toboggan and sat on the stone wall, watching alternately the coasters and the road.

Presently his eyes fell on two open sleighs coming rapidly, one close behind the other.

"I'll bet these are the fellows," Edward called out; and a group gathered by the wall to see.

The first sleigh drew near and passed; the four boys in it were strangers who yet looked as if they might be St. John's fellows, and who turned their eyes on the roadside group with a questioning smile. Then one of them waved his hand, and at that Edward and the others pulled off their caps and waved a welcome.

By that time the second sleigh was almost abreast of them; there were only three boys in that, and one of them was Charles. Edward made a rush for it, scrambled in while it flew by, and the next moment, in the seat beside his brother, was being introduced to Isham, who was captain of the team. The other boy was Jackson.

"Hello!" Edward said, with surprise. "I did n't know you were on the hockey team. Who has to buck up against you this time?"

"Nobody special; I'm going to play cover-

point," Jackson answered. "I got into the game only because Jack Nolan came down yesterday with tonsilitis."

"If you're only a sub, you must have the wonderful team," said Edward. "It's a good thing I'm not in this game."

Charles looked at him and laughed, then squeezed his knee affectionately.

"It's great to see you again, old boy," he said.

In front of the Study the St. Timothy's hockey team were assembled to welcome the visitors. After the greetings were over, Edward pulled at his brother's sleeve.

"There's an hour before luncheon, Charley," he said. "Won't you spend it with me?"

"Yes, you bet. You might take me round and show me the sights. But first I want to drop my bag and my hockey-stick."

"You can put them in my locker in the gymnasium; you'll be dressing there for the game."

As they walked along together, Charles scanned the buildings with curious, interested eyes.

"I've never before had a chance to see much of St. Timothy's," he said. "When I've come over with the team, it's always been just to go straight to the athletic field and then home again. What's that?"

"That's the Lower School. Over there is the Library. That big brown house is where Dr. Davenport lives. Do you have as fine buildings at St. John's?"

"Oh, much finer."

"Go on." Edward jostled his brother good-naturedly.

"Well, just as good. What's this punk-looking place?"

"This is the gymnasium. The inside of it is pretty good, anyhow."

When they entered, Charles peered about with a critical interest.

"Almost as big as ours," he acknowledged finally. "Where are you going to put my things?"

Edward took him down to the locker-room, and from there to the room where were the rowing-machines.

"I've learned a lot on those things," Edward said. "If you want to, Charley, you can sit down on one now, and I'll coach you."

"How cocky all you St. Timothy's fellows do get!" observed Charles.

"Not a bit like you St. John's fellows, then, are we?" rejoined Edward.

But after that they ceased to squabble, and when Edward took his brother into the chapel and pointed out the memorial windows and let him examine the carved stalls in the choir and the lofty arches of the nave, Charles admitted that it was a fine building. "But then it ought to be," he added. "The same man built it that built ours. — Now let me have a look at some of your friends."

So Edward introduced Keating and Lawrence — who indeed had been lurking around in the hope that this opportunity might result — and presented them to Charles.

Charles's comment afterwards was: "They seem like pretty good fellows, but why are they so polite?"

“Why,” said Edward, “would n’t you try to be polite when you met a great man?”

“Oh, cut it out!” cried Charles, feeling very much pleased.

At Mr. Elwood’s table Lawrence and Keating expressed their admiration of Edward’s brother.

“But he’s not so very big, is he, Ned?” said Lawrence.

“No. He weighs only a hundred and forty stripped.”

“Mighty well put together, though — does n’t walk on his ankle-bones.”

“Shut up,” said Keating. “Did you notice what a keen eye he has? I’ll bet he made you stand round, Ned, when you were a kid.”

“But he could n’t make me go to St. John’s,” boasted Edward.

He did not see his brother again until an hour later, when, at the edge of the rink, he stood by Charles and watched him put on his skating-boots.

Charles, like the other St. John’s players, wore a blue jersey and blue stockings and

knickerbockers ; some of them wore shin-pads, but Charles told Edward, who asked him about that, that he never could skate as well when he put them on.

Besides Edward, there was a group of St. John's fellows standing by and talking with Charles while he made his last preparations ; the St. John's delegation of spectators had just arrived. There were not many of them, for only members of the Sixth Form were permitted to make the trip with the hockey team.

"Go after 'em, Charley ; you're the boy !" they called when Charles rose and glided away on his skates.

The St. John's team swung about on the ice, passing the puck from one to another, shooting it through the goals, lifting it on long tosses through the air.

In a few moments the St. Timothy's players, in red jerseys and red stockings, appeared and had their brief warming-up. Then the game began.

For a time it was all wild rushing, sharp whacking and shouting, swift dashing and

quick turning, but not a score. Then Blanchard in the middle of the field blocked the puck that Jackson from coverpoint had lifted on a long pass, and started with it. Charles and Isham, who were St. John's left wing, bore down to intercept him; Sheldon blocked off Isham, and then Blanchard, seeing that Charles in another moment would pen him against the side of the rink, shot the puck far across to Durant.

Two St. John's players made a rush for it as it slid by, but Durant trapped it, turned with it coolly, and darted off at an angle just as the two who had righted themselves came rushing at him.

He ran it past Henderson, St. John's point, he steered it cleverly by Jackson at coverpoint, and then was directly in front of the goal; Charles was flying in from the side in a desperate effort to reinforce the goal-keeper, but he swung with his hockey-stick just a moment late. Durant shot the goal, and a shout of satisfaction went up from St. Timothy's for his cool and brilliant play.

"Game's young yet," Edward heard Charles say cheerfully to Jackson as he swung by for the line-up.

A few minutes later Jackson at coverpoint stopped the puck and lifted it sailing to the farther end of the rink. The St. John's forwards were after it hard, and soon were scrimmaging for it with Blanchard and Sheldon and Bell. Suddenly Charles broke with the puck from the scrimmage, and sweeping in at a sharp angle he skimmed the disk past Wallace through the St. Timothy's goal. The score was tied, and the small band of St. John's supporters were making a great deal of noise.

"Shucks!" said Lawrence to Edward with disgust. "Your brother never ought to have got that, even if he is your brother. Wallace acted as if he was asleep."

St. Timothy's scored again, however, just before the end of the half; Sheldon broke through and carried the puck as far as Jackson, who intercepted it, but could not hold it; Blanchard, following at Sheldon's heels,

snatched it from Jackson and sent it with a swift stroke flying through the goal.

In the second half St. John's seemed to have determined on a change of tactics. Hitherto the game had been played by both teams with as little resort to "body-checking" as possible; it had been a game of fleetness and dexterity, and St. Timothy's had had a shade the better of it.

Now the St. John's players began charging the St. Timothy's fellows, giving them the shoulder, butting into them at full speed; in the first three minutes there were more upsets than there had been in the whole of the preceding half.

Sheldon got away from the scrimmage twice with the puck, only to be the victim each time of what was pretty nearly a head-on collision with Jackson.

Lawrence and Keating began to exclaim heatedly against the roughness of the visitors, but Edward said, —

"Are they doing anything they're not allowed to do?"

Lawrence had to admit that he had detected no foul play. "Just the same they 're playing a rougher game than our fellows," he contended.

"Well, if they think they 're better at that and there 's no rule against it, why should n't they?" Edward asked.

It was certainly not long before St. Timothy's adapted their game to the exigencies of the situation.

"Don't let 'em knock you down that way!" shouted Bell, who was captain. "Go for 'em yourselves!"

There began then to be a good deal of banging round on the ice, of butting one another, of spilling and sprawling. Sheldon was given another hard fall by Jackson.

"Jing!" said Edward. "I know how *his* shoulder feels!"

A moment later Charles had the puck and was racing with it up the side of the rink, close by the low board-fence; Sheldon came at him. Charles sent the puck caroming against the fence and out behind Sheldon, whom he dodged

at the same moment ; then in full possession of the puck again, he charged out into the middle of the field and made for St. Timothy's goal.

"Look at him hike along !" cried Keating.

Edward was indeed thrilled ; his brother was surely skating faster than anybody on that rink had ever skated ; the others were all racing after him, yet all of them were losing distance, not gaining it.

Bell rushed at him from coverpoint, but just as the collision was imminent Charles swerved, with the puck still in the crook of his hockey-stick, and then, having eliminated Bell from his path, he made furiously at the goal. Wallace, spreading himself out in it, made a convulsive effort, but the puck whizzed by a foot from his stick and once more the score was tied.

"Rah, rah, rah, St. John's !" shouted the St. John's Sixth Form, who were gathered together on the farther side of the rink. Then individually they called out their congratulations to Charles : —

"Great run, Charley ! Do it again ! You've got their nerve !"

Charles had been skating hard ; he leaned forward, resting on his hockey-stick, and panted for breath. But a moment later, when the puck had been put in play, he seized it and started off as if to repeat his performance ; he got by Sheldon in just the same way as before, and Lawrence remarked with chagrin, " He's making a monkey of Sheldon."

But this time Durant cut in and by a clever swoop snatched the puck and sent it, with a long pass, across the rink out of danger.

Sheldon's blood was up ; the two tumbles which Jackson had given him, the two pocketings which he had received from Charles Crashaw, had affronted the pride of one who was perhaps something of a grand-stand player. So when a third time Charles snatched the puck from a scrimmage and started off with it, Sheldon dug his skates in the ice and came at him at a sharp angle, with his teeth clenched. Perhaps Crashaw was more than his match at finesse ; well, this time he would n't get away with it. They might both go down together, but anyway Crashaw would n't slip by.

Charles darted a glance at him as he came rushing on, and shoved the puck out temptingly, meaning when Sheldon reached for it to whisk it as before up against the fence and recover it on the rebound. But this time Sheldon ignored the puck entirely ; he rushed into Charles headlong, and together they went down with a great crashing of sticks and clattering of skates. Charles was pitched over the fence out upon the hard frozen ground, where he lay motionless.

CHAPTER VI

A ST. JOHN'S CHAMPION

WHEN his brother went down, Edward was standing with Lawrence and Keating on the farther side of the rink. "Whew, that was a hard one!" he exclaimed. Then he saw Charles lying motionless and the hockey players gathering round him.

"I — I'm afraid your brother's hurt," Lawrence said.

Edward was looking frightened, but he pulled a brave smile; "I guess they can't knock Charles out," he answered.

He started to run; the others followed. Dr. Vincent was just ahead of him, running too, and in the opening that the crowd made for the doctor Edward pushed through.

It was a wonderful relief to him, before even he could see Charles, to hear his brother's voice, although it sounded queer and choked.

"No, no, I'm all right," Charles was saying. "Knocked me silly for a moment, I guess."

Then Edward saw him ; supported by Isham, he was holding a bloody handkerchief to his nose ; his face was pale and bloody. Sheldon was kneeling beside him, and with his own handkerchief was trying to help in staunching the flow of blood.

Dr. Vincent put the handkerchiefs down from the boy's face. Edward had for a moment a sensation of faintness, of horror ; would Charles, his handsome brother, be disfigured for life? His nose was battered over to one side and was already thick and swollen. The doctor bathed his face from the pail of water that some one had brought, and then felt and pressed the injured nose.

"Hurt?" he said.

"Oh, some," replied Charles.

"It's broken ; well, there's not much that can be done for it just now. — One moment."

Charles bore without wincing the treatment to which he was subjected. When it was over,

he smiled at Edward, who had edged closer and got hold of his hand.

"Cheer up, Ned," he said. "What are you looking so blue about? You fellows have a chance to beat us yet."

There was laughter at that, the laughter of relief and of applause.

With Charles showing such fortitude, Edward felt that he must be equally stoical. So instead of saying what had been on his lips, — "O Charley, does it hurt awfully? Are you all right? Is n't there something I can do?" — he merely observed, "Your face, Charley, is certainly a mess."

All the St. Timothy's boys clapped when Charles got to his feet and skated again out on the ice; and then Jim Payne called for a cheer, and they gave nine *rahs*, with "Crashaw" at the end of them; that made Edward's eyes shine and his face flush, and he looked shyly away when Lawrence and Keating glanced at him and smiled.

Yet it was in pity almost as much as in admiration that the boys applauded Charles; his

appearance was that of one better qualified for the hospital than the rink. His face was gory, his blue jersey was smeared with blood; his swollen nose and bruised, discolored cheek gave him a desperate look. He swung round once or twice cautiously, then took a half-dozen long confident strokes.

"All right," he said; and the game proceeded.

Within a few seconds Edward realized that St. Timothy's had singled out Charles now as the vulnerable point, and were directing at him their most severe attack—just as in the football game Charles had singled out Edward. The understanding came to Edward in a flash when Durant wheeled with the puck and charged clear across the rink at Charles.

He did not get by; there was a momentary scrimmage, and then the puck was hit wildly out into the centre, where Sheldon secured it. He pivoted an instant, hesitating; then shot it to Durant, who this time approached Charles with tempting deliberation. Charles made a rush; Durant flicked the puck out of his reach,

Blanchard captured it and got safely away from all the forwards, and past Jackson at coverpoint, only to be thwarted at the last by the goal-keeper, who sent the puck skimming out of danger amid the shouts of St. John's.

Charles picked it up at the side of the rink and started with it. He came down along the side, close by where Edward stood, and right there Sheldon rushed to meet him.

Edward held his breath; was there to be another collision like the last? Perhaps the same question caused Sheldon a moment's uncertainty—the question and the glimpse of Charles's bloody face; he slackened his speed a little, as if undecided whether to charge his man or to try to snatch the puck from under his hockey; and in that instant of indecision Charles made a sudden swerve, seemed to leap into increased speed, and eluding Sheldon entirely, swept down the middle of the rink.

In a moment he seemed surrounded by St. Timothy's players; but then magically he emerged from them, still racing toward their goal, the puck clinging in the crook of his

hockey, as if tied there. He was outskating them all ; only Durant, rushing in at an angle, had a chance to head him off, — Durant and Wallace the goal-keeper.

The three came together squarely in front of the goal, came together and went down in a clashing heap ; but even as they fell, St. John's were shouting triumphantly, for at the very moment of the collision Charles had shot the goal.

When he got up, his nose was bleeding afresh, but he did not mind that. There was only a minute more to play, and the game was practically won. He skated slowly to his position, down the side of the rink ; holding his bloody handkerchief to his face, he saw Edward in the front rank of the subdued St. Timothy's spectators, and Edward's face was so different from all the others !

It was alight with pride and admiration and love ; Charles could not help reading all those things in a glance ; it was not darkened by the chagrin and disappointment of defeat. There was not one of the St. John's Sixth Formers who looked any happier.

Charles turned ; the play had begun again. There was one furious scrimmage ; then the timekeeper blew his whistle : the game was over.

Instantly the St. John's Sixth Formers were out on the ice, slipping, sliding, crowding round their men — especially about Charles ; they were jubilant and hilarious. The St. Timothy's players left them in possession of the rink and silently sat down outside to take off their skating-boots ; and the St. Timothy's spectators began silently to move away. But Edward lingered ; he came up to his brother and put his arm over his shoulder and pressed his hand.

“ You old chump ! ” he said. “ What's the use of our smashing you up — if you go ahead and lick us just the same ? ”

“ Don't make me laugh,” said Charles. “ It hurts.” He pointed to a cut on his lip. “ Help me off with these skating-boots, will you ? ”

He stretched himself out on the ground ; Edward busied himself with the right foot and a St. John's boy with the left, and Charles,

lying on his back, introduced them to each other. The chorus of praise for his achievement continued round him; the other members of the team were there, joining in with the Sixth Form spectators. Edward, working silently, thrilled with pride at hearing all that was said, and felt more kindly than ever towards St. John's.

He had a few moments alone with his brother in the gymnasium while Charles was changing his clothes.

"Does it hurt much?" he asked. "It looks like the dickens."

"No; it sort of feels in the way; that's all. And my head aches a little from getting such a crack. — Look here, Ned; you need n't say anything about it when you write home."

"Why not?"

"Oh, there's no use in worrying them. Mother would probably go right up in the air if she heard I'd broken my nose. It'll come back into shape in time."

"You'd better stay over to-night and let Dr. Vincent fix it."

"Nothing to fix. If there is, I guess Dr. Barrett at St. John's can do just as good a job as your man. Now, mind; you're not to mention it when you write home."

"All right," said Edward reluctantly. "It will sort of spoil the story, though."

"What do you mean?"

"Why, I'd like to tell them how you won the game, after being knocked out — when our fellows thought they could go through you, the way — the way you went through me."

"Oh, shucks!" said Charles. "No, don't, Ned. I think it would only worry mother."

"All right." Edward's voice was resigned. "But if I could tell it the way I saw it, she and father would be awfully proud of you — just like me, Charley."

"Oh no, they would n't; they have too much sense." Charles gave his brother an affectionate, humorous glance.

But Edward persisted earnestly: "They could n't help being proud. It was splendid, Charley. But I almost wish you had n't done it."

"Of course. You wanted your team to win."

"Yes, but it was n't only that." Edward hesitated shyly. "It was mostly because you acted so differently from me."

"But it was n't at all the same thing."

"Pretty much. Only you played a winning game and I played a losing one."

"Forget it."

"I can't, Charley, until I have another chance to make good. And if I should n't then —!"

"Look here, kid, you're getting foolish. All you want to do is to play the game, or row, or whatever it is, for all the fun there is in it—and just don't think about having to make good. That's foolishness."

"But when you go into a thing, you always feel that in a tight place you must come up to the scratch, don't you? And you always do come up."

"I just feel that I want to win, because it's more fun when you're winning. And so I go out to win. That's all there is to it. — Is n't

it disgusting — the way that new overcoat of mine crocks my collar ! ”

“ It looks all right. — Then you won’t let me write home and tell about the game all that’s really worth telling ? ”

“ All that’s worth telling is that St. John’s won. ”

“ You know that is n’t what the family would think. ”

“ You can say I made the winning score. But I’d rather you would n’t go into any details. ”

“ I’m sure I could make it just as fine and thrilling for father and mother as it was for me, ” sighed Edward. “ You know, Charley, really the game could n’t have turned out in a way to please me more. It is n’t right, I suppose — but I can’t help caring more for you than for St. Timothy’s. ”

They both laughed, and just then Sheldon came up, his broad good-natured face as cheerful as if he had been participating in a victory.

“ I guess I need n’t have been so sympathetic, Crashaw, ” he said. “ Wish I’d stood you on your head again. ”

"Why did n't you?"

"I was just trying to make up my mind to do it when you got by," Sheldon acknowledged. "I'm too tender-hearted; that's what's the matter with me. — Little brother here is getting to be quite the oarsman. You going to row this year, Crashaw?"

"Yes, I'm expecting to."

"Well, I shouldn't wonder if there'd be a Crashaw on the winning crew this year, as well as on the losing one."

"I like your news better than your way of putting it," Charles answered.

When they had shaken hands and Sheldon had departed, Charles turned to Edward.

"That *is* pretty good news," he said. "I suppose that coming from the captain of the School crew it's pretty straight?"

"Oh, Sheldon has n't given a thought to the crew yet," Edward answered. "He was just being pleasant."

"He would n't have said a thing like that without some reason!"

"Mr. Burns may have told him I was pro-

missing. But how can Sheldon know as early as this — before half the fellows have begun rowing?"

"I guess he's a good fellow but not much of a captain," Charles said thoughtfully. "He didn't act right this afternoon."

"What, in knocking you down the way he did?"

"No; in not knocking me down again. He knows he made a mistake; that's why he said he was too tender-hearted. It was n't that exactly; he lost his nerve. I bet you Sheldon's a fellow that loses his nerve."

"No, I don't believe he does."

"You see. He's a good fellow, but he's a sort of a quitter, I'll bet anything. You see."

The very word "quitter" had a sobering effect on Edward. To hear it applied to one who, he felt, deserved it far less than he did himself, made him very uncomfortable, and he became silent. Charles attributed his silence to disapproval of such derogatory remarks about the St. Timothy's captain.

"Oh well," said Charles pacifically, "that's

just a notion I have, and of course I don't know him. I think he's a mighty good fellow just the same, and I'm awfully glad we're to be classmates at college, so that I'll learn to know him better. — Here, I can carry my own bag."

"Please let me," begged Edward.

When they emerged from the gymnasium, snow was falling, the twilight of the early evening had descended, lights shone from the windows of the School buildings. In front of the Study waited the two open sleighs, and by the gate were clustered a group of boys — members of the St. Timothy's and St. John's hockey teams, exchanging good wishes and farewells.

"Hurry up, Charley! Hurry up!" cried some of the St. John's boys. "We've all been waiting for you."

Charles shook hands all round with the St. Timothy's team; last of all with his brother. Edward murmured in his ear, just as he was getting into the sleigh, "Good-bye, Charley. I wish I were more like you!"

"What?" Charles looked round at him with the startled exclamation.

But there was no time for more words; Isham, the St. John's captain, stood up in the forward sleigh and called for three cheers for St. Timothy's; and at the end of them the horses were off at a jump, pursued by the answering cheers of St. Timothy's for St. John's.

Edward wrote to his mother that night; with the restrictions that had been imposed he tried to make his account of the game as graphic and stirring as possible — especially all that had to do with Charles. He was dissatisfied with his effort, and perhaps would have been even more displeased with it could he have seen his mother and father laughing together over one of the most impassioned passages.

His spelling was never very good, and it became more erratic than usual when his pen was driven by excitement.

"He went through the whole bunch like magic," Edward wrote. "I was thrilled to the bone when I saw him emmerge, still carrying the puck and skateing like the wind. In another moment he had shot the goal, and I was proud to think that he was my brother."

It was rather chilling to receive his mother's letter in reply, with all the mis-spelled words listed and corrected.

"But it is nice to have you so enthusiastic about your brother's performance, and so proud of him," she wrote. "I am glad you gave us such a good account; I suppose it was Charles's modesty, but from his letter about the game I could n't have told that he did anything noteworthy. We're so glad that he distinguished himself, and that you were there to enjoy it and to tell us of it."

With the hockey season at an end, Edward expected that Sheldon would settle down to his work with the crew. But the captain was hardly more regular in his attendance than before. When the ice was good, he would be skating; when there was no ice, he would spend part of his time practising his feats in the gymnasium. The crew-squad grew in size slowly, but Edward retained his place in the first division and rowed regularly at number three. Davis, a Sixth Former who had recently come out as a candidate, was put in at stroke; Sheldon himself

rowed seven, and Grant of the Fifth Form rowed five. The other places were constantly undergoing change; but it appeared as if Mr. Burns and Sheldon had definitely chosen four members of the crew.

Edward was elated of course at the indication, and did not regret the fact that he was no longer asked to run the squad; in Sheldon's absence Davis, the Sixth Former, naturally took charge.

The captain's carelessness occasioned less grumbling among the fellows than might have been expected. They recognized Mr. Burns as the real coach and felt that with him at hand an intelligent eye was always on them. Besides, Sheldon was so good-natured and jovial that he seemed to command a special indulgence.

And then it was understood among his crew candidates that he was to take a prominent part in the gymnastic exhibition which was to be held the night before Easter; and of course he had to keep himself in practice for that.

Easter was always the last day of the winter

term. Edward wrote to his mother, urging her to come up for it.

“The chapel service is something that you ought to see; every one says so; and then the night before Easter there's to be an athletic exhibition in the gymnasium. You might n't care much about the horizontal bar and flying rings and all that, but I guess father would n't mind seeing it. And the two crews, Pythian and Corinthian, are to give an exhibition of rowing on the rowing-machines. I shall be in that, because I'm on the Pythians. It won't be especially exciting, but I guess maybe I'd row better if you and father were in the audience. And then the day after Easter we could all go home together; that would be great.”

He was delighted when his mother wrote that she and his father would come.

CHAPTER VII

FAREWELL TO A HERO

EDWARD met his father and mother at the station; his mother spied him before he saw her, and ran to him along the platform, her bright, eager face radiant, her eyes shining. He saw her then and with a spring seized her in his arms; and after he had kissed her and his father she clung to him and looked up into his face enraptured.

“Come, Helen,” said Mr. Crashaw at last. “Let the husky boy lug one of these bags for the old man.”

Edward seized both the bags and carried them to a cab; during the drive to the hotel his mother sat beside him caressing his hand.

“Oh, my dear, it’s good to see you and touch you and hear you again!” she exclaimed. “And you’re getting to be almost good-looking!”

"Mother," Edward entreated, "don't be an old silly!"

She answered with the low laugh that he loved, and sat caressing his hand.

"I hope you won't mind," he said. "I've invited Francis Keating and Joe Lawrence to come in and dine with us to-night; you know, they're about my best friends."

"Of course we want to meet your friends, Edward; I'm glad you invited the boys."

She could not help being glad, for Keating and Lawrence revealed to her sympathetic eyes the most devoted affection and admiration for Edward; and besides that, their appreciation of the hotel food was so appealing!

"Just think!" exclaimed Lawrence, after acknowledging that he would like a second plate of ice-cream, "this is the night for corned-beef hash, Edward!"

"And prunes," Keating reminded him.

"The worst of it is, I can't stuff myself the way you fellows can," complained Edward. "I have to row to-night."

He kept looking anxiously at his watch, and

the moment they had finished dinner he hurried them out of the hotel and into a carriage. He himself sat on the box with the coachman; and so during the drive to the School Lawrence and Keating were able to carry on their eulogy of him without embarrassment or interference.

"He's about the best-liked fellow in our form," said Lawrence.

"He's one of the most popular fellows in the whole school," declared Keating.

"He's never stood at the head of his class," observed Mr. Crashaw.

"Oh, Keat here always has that place cinched," answered Lawrence.

"I'd be glad to change with Edward if I could do the things he can!"

The wistful, honest admiration in Keating's voice touched Mr. Crashaw, and he made no other jocularly disparaging comment about his son.

When Mr. and Mrs. Crashaw were seated in the front rank of the spectators in the gymnasium and Edward had gone to dress

for the rowing exhibition, Keating and Lawrence pointed out the various personages of the School. Mrs. Crashaw was especially interested in seeing Blanchard and Payne and other boys whom Edward had mentioned often in his letters.

The gymnasium filled rapidly; nearly all the floor-space was occupied with benches; only at the end was reserved a place for the performers; there were set up the rowing-machines, the parallel bars, the horizontal bar, and the inclined ladders.

The rattle of talk and laughter was suddenly submerged in applause; ten little First Formers, clad in white gymnasium suits and carrying, each one, a pair of tiny Indian clubs, emerged from the stairway at the left and trotted forward in front of the rowing-machines. Then they began swinging their clubs, all keeping time together, their small bare arms twinkling, their chests out, some of them with smiling faces, some of them serious and intent.

"The little dears!" exclaimed Mrs. Crashaw.

They executed intricate twirls and flourishes smoothly and in unison ; and at last, with a simultaneous flourish, they tucked their clubs under their arms, bobbed a little bow, and amidst applause pattered off to the stairway.

Next came the vaulting contest, won by Watts, captain of the School track team; Sheldon was second. Then two Fifth Formers with basket-like helmets on their heads and padded sweaters on their shoulders engaged in a spirited but bloodless fencing-bout ; after which Payne and Blanchard, who were two of the best boxers in the School, had a sparring-match which was not quite bloodless and which provoked great hilarity among the boys.

Mrs. Crashaw thought that was almost too much, even though assured by Lawrence that Payne and Blanchard were bosom friends ; she preferred the performances on the horizontal bar and on the parallel bars, in both of which Sheldon took part,—not very gloriously, for he failed in attempting feats which the others executed. Mrs. Crashaw had by that time begun to notice him ; she commented

on his splendid muscles, the ease with which they served him.

"And yet he never seems to be quite the best in anything," she observed with some disappointment, after the competition on the parallel bars had been awarded to a Fifth Former named Bird. "I'm sorry, for I've heard Edward speak of him, and I know how much he likes him."

"He's the best oarsman in school, I guess," said Lawrence. "And he's good in nearly everything, even if he isn't always the best."

Standing on the stairs with the other members of the crew, all dressed for rowing, Edward had been looking on at the performances, watching Sheldon especially, and feeling somehow disappointed, too, because Sheldon did not do better. He failed on feats which Edward had seen him accomplish with ease before a group of admiring little kids.

Charles's remark about Sheldon, "He's a quitter," flashed into Edward's mind. Could his brother after all be right in that? Charles was so seldom wrong!

The Corinthian crew filed out and took their seats on the rowing-machines.

"Attention!" cried Cole, the captain, and they all came forward to the full reach and waited.

"Stroke!" They began to row.

Edward from the stairway watched them critically. Durant was rowing stroke, and Edward admired the way in which he gradually raised the speed until in the last minute of the exhibition the Corinthian crew were swinging through it just as rhythmically as at the beginning, yet with a tremendous acceleration of power.

"I wonder if we're as smooth a crew as that," thought Edward. It would be a severe test to go on after such an exhibition.

But when the Pythians rowed, there was at least one person in the audience who was quite unconscious whether they were doing it well or not.

Mrs. Crashaw saw but one member of that crew; on him she held her eyes. And when they had finished, and Lawrence said, "They

don't row as smoothly as the Corinthians, do they?" she answered, "Don't they? I was just watching Edward."

Edward himself knew that they had n't rowed as well — knew it before even the applause, so much lighter than that which the Corinthians had received, informed him. From his place at number three he had seen the break just behind Sheldon.

"Shucks! We were rotten!" Dillaway, the bow oar, exclaimed on the stairway.

"Oh, well," Sheldon answered, "races are n't won on just form."

The ladder-climbing was the next event on the programme; Fraser and Sheldon were the only entries, and Fraser was in the Infirmary with the measles. So Sheldon stepped out alone.

Edward waited on the stairs before going down to dress. He saw Sheldon rub his hands with resin, then start springing up the long, slanting ladder, slap, slap, slap, chinning himself and jumping up from each rung.

Halfway up his speed slackened ; each leap

seemed to require a greater gathering of himself for the effort; at last he changed to the easier hand-over-hand method, and even with that was unable to reach the top. Six or eight rungs below the horizontal ladder his strength failed, and he stopped.

There was a great outburst of applause for him as he came slowly down; but Edward on the stairs was disappointed again. Sheldon brushed past him and went downstairs on the run.

Edward glanced at him from time to time while they dressed; he had never seen Sheldon so silent.

After a while Sheldon said to him, though just as if he were talking to himself, "What's the use of practising stunts if you can't do them when you want to!"

"You did them all pretty well," said Edward.

"Pretty well!" answered Sheldon in a tone of scorn, and walked away.

Edward knew exactly how he was feeling, and he was so sympathetic he wished he could

run after him and say, "I've been there too; I know what it is." But he was younger than Sheldon and diffident; he felt that it might be fresh to do that.

He knew that Sheldon was thinking himself exactly what Charles had thought him, and that he was unhappy about it and disheartened. Somehow, having been so close to him in the moment when he had revealed the feeling depressed Edward. He had liked Sheldon from the first, and in spite of all the boy's defects as a captain had grown to like him more and more.

When Edward rejoined his father and mother, he was rather subdued; they attributed it to the fact that the Corinthian crew had done better than the Pythians.

At the end of the exhibition Mr. Barclay made a little speech and awarded the medals to the prize-winners; when he called out, "Ladder Climbing, won by T. P. Sheldon," there was a faint whisper of laughter which was not quite extinguished by the applause. Edward was sorry again for Sheldon and angry

at those who laughed ; it was bad enough to win a prize when no one else had contested for it ; to have the award received with even the least mocking laughter was too much.

“Just the same,” Edward said to Keating and Lawrence, “it was sandy of Sheldon to go into that thing all by himself. It took nerve.”

“Um,” said Lawrence. “Don’t see why he didn’t do better, though.”

Even on the next day, Easter Sunday, Edward’s pleasure was clouded. He had brought Sheldon up to his father and mother, and Mr. Crashaw had congratulated the boy on his athletic prowess.

Sheldon, without meaning to be ungracious, said, “Oh, I don’t deserve to be congratulated on that, Mr. Crashaw. Anybody can win an event if he’s the only one in it.”

“But I was thinking of the showing you made in so many events — your versatility,” said Mr. Crashaw.

Sheldon could find no answer except a doleful smile. Afterwards when he saw Edward alone for a moment he said to him, “I guess

your father thinks I'm an awful stiff. But I feel so differently from the way he supposes I do — that's all."

Edward understood: he knew that a fellow who feels that he has been a quitter likes most of all to shut himself off from the world, and least of all to hear well-intended compliments. Sheldon was still in low spirits the next morning when Edward said good-bye to him.

At home the Crashaw family found Charles, who had arrived from St. John's by an earlier train. Edward was disappointed by Charles's nose, which looked just as swollen and distorted as when he had last seen it; and Mrs. Crashaw, quite unprepared for such a disfigurement, was shocked by it. She insisted on his placing himself in the hands of a specialist at once.

In consequence Charles submitted the next day to an operation, from which he returned with his nose in a plaster bandage.

"Always something in a sling when I have a vacation," he grumbled. "A hand or a nose or something."

Being sensitive about his appearance, he kept closely to the house and spent even more time on the rowing-machine than he had done during the Christmas holidays. And on account of the surgeon's requirements, his return to school was delayed for a week after the vacation had expired and after Edward had gone back to St. Timothy's.

So Edward did not see the nose when it at last emerged; but Charles sent him a glowing account of it.

"Not larger but handsomer than before," he wrote. "I am sorry you could not be present at the unveiling. Everything came off without a hitch, and once more I have the kind of nose that mother used to like. I'm off for St. John's to-morrow."

This good news reached Edward on the day when the candidates for the St. Timothy's baseball nine were called out. Jim Payne made an earnest appeal to Edward to give up rowing; he was needed on first base; it would be the weakest batting nine that St. Timothy's had had in years.

But Edward had now had his first experience of rowing on the pond and was enjoying it; and he knew that his chances of being chosen on the School crew were good. So he had not been moved by Payne's appeal, and the captain had departed gloomily.

It was just after the last recitation of the morning, and Edward still lingered on the Study steps, taking long breaths and exulting in the freshness of the wind and sun.

This was the first morning in which there had been the premonitory warmth and softness of summer; the birds were singing gayly from the rectory hedge, the sunlight illuminated the heart of every young-leaved tree, flooded through elm and maple, tinting the green with gold, and swept, chasing the shadow of a cloud, over the chapel lawn.

Edward was thinking how fine it would be that afternoon to be rowing bare-armed on the pond, to be feeling for the first time warm without a sweater and strong with all the freedom of naked muscles;—he drew in another deep breath; and just at that moment

Lawrence came up to him with a portentous face.

“Well, is n’t it fierce?” said Lawrence.

“What?” asked Edward.

“Have n’t you heard? Sheldon has to leave school.”

“What do you mean?”

“He flunked his exams; they told him this morning.”

“They’ve fired him!” Edward exclaimed, aghast.

“No, not that exactly. The Rector said that he was n’t up to doing Sixth Form work, and that if he really wanted to enter college next fall, he would have to leave school and tutor. So he’s going to-morrow.”

“Who told you all this?”

“Joe Davis, on your crew. He wanted me to tell you there would n’t be any rowing to-day — and then he told me why.”

“It’s tough!” said Edward. “Poor old Sheldon!”

“He’s all broken up about it, Davis says.”

They walked away together in a sorrowful silence.

At the School that day at luncheon every one was talking of the calamity. There was general depression ; it was not merely because the loss of the captain of the crew would be serious, but it was also a tribute to Sheldon's personality.

There were other boys in the Sixth Form who were more respectfully admired because they had greater force — Blanchard, for instance, and perhaps Durant and Payne ; but Sheldon's following adored him. There was hardly a Third Former who frequented the gymnasium who had not had the privilege of feeling Sheldon's muscles and calling him Tom ; he was kind and friendly to them all, and always pretended to know them even if he could n't remember their names ; and his very enjoyment of their admiration endeared him to them.

" If everybody is so gloomy about it here," said Lawrence, " it must be a regular funeral over at the Upper ; I wonder how Tom stands it."

“It must be pretty hard for him,” agreed Edward. “But sort of nice too. — I don’t suppose he ’ll want to see many fellows to say good-bye — just a few of his best friends,” he added rather wistfully.

That afternoon he loitered by the edge of the pond and watched the Corinthian crew row; Cole had his men out in spite of the tragedy. One or two Pythians who stood by, moping like Edward, were disposed to criticize him for it; they thought it would have shown a better feeling if he had ordered a day of rest in recognition of his adversary’s misfortune.

Discussion of the point offered them some desultory amusement, but Edward did not pay much attention to it. He would have liked to be out on the pond with the Corinthians; perhaps he was heartless even to think of such a thing! His fine green and gold day had turned dreary — and what must it be for Sheldon!

Davis came up and touched him on the shoulder.

"Tom would like to see you, Crashaw," he said. "He's in his room at the Upper."

There Edward found Sheldon sitting inefficiently with a trunk half-packed and a muss of books, clothes, and athletic trophies on the floor and on the bed.

"I always hate to pack," he said, with a doleful smile. "And this is worse than usual."

"I'm pretty good at it," said Edward. "Let me help."

"No, thanks." Sheldon spoke more briskly. "I'm the only fellow that can handle this mess. I'll have lots of time when you and the others are in Study. I thought I might n't see you again, Edward, and I wanted to say good-bye."

"I'm awfully sorry you're going, Tom."

"So am I. Well, it's my own fault. If I had n't been such a stupid dolt! It was n't altogether stupidity, either; that's the worst of it."

"You've been doing so many things," Edward said consolingly.

"Yes, and letting everything slide that was

worth while! I'll tell you what my trouble was, Edward. I wanted to be picked at the end of the year as the greatest all-round athlete in the School. I thought I could be — football, hockey, rowing, all those things — all I needed to clinch it was to show off in the gymnasium besides. But when it came really to the point, with the audience there and all — I did only about half as well as I'd done in practice. That's the way I've been in everything; that's the way I was in these exams that threw me down. I'm a great big showy duffer — and no good at all in the crisis. But I'm going to be good" — he caught up the pillow from the bed and slammed it viciously at the wall. "You bet I am. I'm going to get into college this fall if I have to study twenty-four hours a day. And when I get in! —" He gave the pillow a finishing punch.

Edward was rather embarrassed at such an outpouring of soul; he did not know quite what to say.

"Don't you suppose nearly everybody has sort of given up at times, when really they

might have had a little more fight left in them?" he asked.

"At times, maybe, but it seems as if it had got to be a habit with me," responded Sheldon gloomily. "I know that you fellows must have been thinking I was a mighty poor crew captain; but I'd come back this term meaning to stick to my job and show you I was n't a mistake — and somehow I never thought of being tripped up by those examinations."

"I guess we would all have known you were n't a mistake," said Edward.

"But I was! A captain that has to quit his crew! — Well, I did n't mean to get you up here just to cry on your shoulder. I wanted to do the last thing I can as captain: I wanted to have a little talk with every fellow that's sure of a place in the St. Timothy's boat. You're one."

"You really think so?"

"Of course. Mr. Burns has you picked all right. There will be you and Davis and Durant and Cochrane and Quinby; you five are sure. I hope you'll elect Durant captain. He

really ought to have been captain instead of me; that's one thing I wanted to say to you. Another is: I'm coming up to see the race with St. John's if my tutor lets me. And if they lick you, why, I shall feel it was probably because of my leaving and busting up the crew that had chosen me captain; but if you win, I'll feel — well, that I was captain of you for a little while and that I might have been there too."

He turned away and stood for a moment gazing out of the window. Then he came back to Edward, who had been sitting with downcast eyes, unwilling to see Sheldon's emotion or to show his own.

"You like me enough to want me to have a good time when I come back, and not a poor one — don't you, Edward?"

There was an affectionate playfulness in Sheldon's voice, in his smile; and Edward, looking up, only nodded; he felt too uncertain of his voice to speak.

"All right," Sheldon continued, "that's all I wanted to say to you as captain of the

crew. But it was n't just as captain that I wanted to see you, Edward, and say good-bye. It's because I like you too — and I hope that we'll still be friends a couple of years from now when we're both in college."

He held out his hand, and Edward grasped it.

"Thank you," he said. "I guess we will. I guess everybody that goes from this school to college with me, will be a friend of yours, Tom."

He went down the stairs of the Upper School with a dimness in his eyes which even the bright sunshine of the afternoon did not immediately clear away.

The next morning, a few moments before chapel, when most of the boys were waiting in front of the Study for the bell to ring, a carriage with a trunk strapped on behind drove up to the gate. From it alighted Blanchard and Davis and Durant, and last of all Sheldon.

Soon a group had gathered round him, Edward among them and Mr. Barclay and Mr. Burns, and many little boys. Sheldon was busy

shaking hands; there was a good deal of laughter and forced gayety.

"Don't forget and mark me absent from chapel this morning, Mr. Barclay," he said.

And Mr. Barclay answered with a mournful smile, "I wish that I could, and that you'd be here to-morrow to write the report, Tom."

Sheldon's lip quivered then for the first time; he stiffened it and caught Edward's hand.

"Good-bye again, old man," he murmured. "Wait, I've got a present for you;" and he put into Edward's hand the pocket-mirror over which their acquaintance had begun.

Edward smiled and glanced at it with blurred eyes.

A small boy at Sheldon's side, one of his gymnasium satellites, was looking up timidly.

"Hello, Jasper!" Sheldon patted the small one's shoulder. "You'll not forget how to skin the cat, will you?"

The chapel bell began to ring. Sheldon stepped back into the carriage; the driver touched the horses with the whip.

“ Good-bye ! ” shouted the boys.

“ Good-bye ! ” cried Sheldon.

As the carriage mounted the hill, other boys hurrying down on the way to chapel took off their hats and waved and caught Sheldon’s farewell salute ; and only one boy who was late, and who therefore had no right to see it, had a glimpse of Sheldon sitting there dabbing his handkerchief to his eyes.

CHAPTER VIII

SHELDON'S SUCCESSOR

SHELDON'S withdrawal from the School made Edward's position in one respect easier: Jim Payne, who had been displeased by his refusal to play baseball, was now mollified. He came to Edward that very day and said, "Well, I suppose I can't blame you any longer if you insist on rowing."

"I certainly hope you won't blame me," Edward answered.

"I suppose, with Sheldon gone, you'll be needed in the boat about as much as on the nine," Payne conceded. "I wish there were two of you, Edward."

"I guess you think I'm a great deal better than I am."

"No, I don't. I remember the first time I ever saw you stand up to bat, and I knew right off what you could do. You can't fool me; I know a natural-born hitter when I see

one. It's too bad to think of all that talent being wasted. But as it stands now, I can't blame you." Payne sighed and turned away.

When, a few weeks later, Edward learned that Keating had been chosen to play first base on the nine, and saw Keating's joy, he was more glad than ever that he himself was rowing and so could not deprive his friend of the chance.

Keating treated his "table" to strawberries by way of celebrating his achievement. Edward spoke afterwards to Payne about it and expressed his pleasure that Keating had made the team.

"He's great on first base," Payne said. "He can't miss 'em — pick-ups, wide balls, high ones, he eats 'em all. But at the bat he's a mess. He can't hit for little green apples."

"Maybe he'll learn."

"He does n't seem to. If a fellow has n't a natural eye for hitting the ball, you can't teach him much."

"If you think it might help, I'll coach him in the noon hour."

“I wish you would. Look here ; bring him down to the field to-morrow.”

As soon as the Greek recitation the next day was at an end, Edward and Keating hurried to the field. Bell and Payne were already there ; they threw off coats and neckties and collars and were soon at work practising against the batting-net. Lawrence had come down to look on, and made himself useful in chasing balls.

Keating was, Edward had to acknowledge, a discouraging subject. He was willing enough, but he lacked weight and strength ; he could n't seem to help stepping away from the ball ; and he invariably swung his bat in a slant instead of in a horizontal plane. Bell pitched easy curves to him, but Keating knocked almost nothing but pop flies.

Edward took the bat and stood at the plate, stepped forward, swung at an imaginary ball — went through the motions again and again, did them slowly and did them fast ; and Keating watched intelligently and listened intelligently, but could n't himself perform.

"Let me hit out one or two; perhaps then you'll get on to it better," said Edward.

He planted himself with the bat over his shoulder. Bell sent a swift inshoot; Edward met it squarely, and the next moment Lawrence was chasing a line ball far in the outfield.

"If I could paste one of those in a lifetime I'd die happy," sighed Keating.

Bell was rather annoyed at having one of his curves hit so hard.

"I gave you a chance on that ball," he said. "Bet you can't do it again, Crashaw."

"Come on," said Edward, and squared himself.

The next ball that Bell pitched was wild, and Edward let it go by. Then came a slow out-drop to tempt him; but he refused to strike, and it curved wide of the plate. The third ball he swung at, and drove, again on a line, into left field.

Lawrence was going after it, but Durant, who appeared at that moment, walking with Wallace at the edge of the field, saved him

the trouble. After throwing it in, Durant came up to the ball-players. Bell, with his spirit roused, was determined now to strike Edward out ; he had pitched two wild balls in the effort when Durant interrupted.

“Crashaw,” he called, “you’ve not quit rowing for baseball, have you?”

“Oh no,” said Edward. “I’m just fooling.”

“Well, look here a moment.” Durant hastened forward. “I think you’d better not do this sort of thing. You mustn’t risk getting hit and maybe hurt.”

“There’s not much danger.”

“I know, but you might get a crack on the arm or the wrist or the head that would spoil your rowing for a while. I wish you wouldn’t.”

“All right.” Edward relinquished the bat to Keating. “There, you see the principle of the thing, Keat ; step right out at the ball and meet it with your whole body in the blow ; don’t just swipe at it with your arms.”

“What are you doing? Coaching him?” asked Durant curiously.

“Yes — trying to.”

"All right — only don't stand up to the ball yourself." Durant strolled away.

"I wish old Tom Sheldon were here; he wouldn't have been so fussy," muttered Payne. "When was Durant elected captain — only yesterday, wasn't he? What's he trying to do — show his authority?"

"No, he's all right; I might get hurt, I suppose. I guess Keat sees the idea. Try again, Keat."

But neither that day nor on subsequent days, when Edward supervised his friend's batting, did Keating display any improvement.

"I guess I'll just have to swipe at the ball and trust to luck," Keating said at last disconsolately. "If I could sometime make one good hit, so as to have some confidence!"

But he went through the Pythian-Corinthian series without ever achieving that single hit; his position at the foot of the batting list was assured.

The days grew warm; it was the most pleasant season of all the school year. With the scent of the lilacs coming through the

windows, with the glimpse of the sunny bright rectory lawn to take one's eye from the textbook, it was harder to fix one's attention in the class-room than it had been during the dreary days of winter; yet the confinement was in a way less irksome too. There was so much more to look forward to when one did get out of doors! And out of doors Edward was sure he had never had so good a time. Every afternoon to drive with the crew the two miles to the pond, shouting songs, breathing in the fragrance of the pines along the road, yelling at the chipmunks that raced on stone walls and up tree-trunks — that was a fine way of settling one's comfortable training-table dinner.

Then there was a pleasant scramble down a forest path, with columbines and lady-slip-pers all along it to snatch for one's button-hole — except that usually one was too busy undressing as one ran. In the boat-house it was a race to see who could strip first; always within seven minutes they had the shell in the water and were bending to the stroke.

There was an hour and a half of practice, not all hard work; much of the time they would be paddling leisurely or resting on their oars while Mr. Burns coached them from the motor-boat; or they would be studying the performance of their rivals, the Corinthians, on the farther side of the lake, and prowling about in the Corinthian neighborhood as unassumingly as possible.

But at the last there would be a racing start and a sprint that always brought them to the float with brown bodies glistening and foreheads bedewed and chests heaving — so that the two buckets of water allowed each man seemed utterly inadequate, and they longed tremendously for the debilitating and forbidden swim!

Still, after they had made the most of their two buckets and had rubbed down and dressed and were seated again in the big open wagon, with the cool breeze drying their second sweat, they had no regrets — none at least if they had prepared that morning for the afternoon recitations to which now they were speedily whirled.

Edward enjoyed it all, though the race itself with the Corinthians was disappointing. It had been generally predicted that the Corinthians would win, but not by a margin of about ten lengths; they trailed the Pythians from the start.

Edward, who rowed seven in the Pythian boat, the important position which Sheldon had vacated, was much cast down and wondered if he was more than one eighth to blame, and if after all he might not be given the expected place in the School boat.

His misgivings proved unfounded; the disastrous "break" in the Pythian boat had occurred behind him; numbers three and four caught crabs, and two weakened; in fact, the general opinion was that only Davis at stroke and Edward at seven had rowed in first-crew form.

And they were the only ones from the Pythian crew to be chosen for the School boat; the other six were all Corinthians. Durrant was stroke, Edward was put in at seven and Davis at six; then followed five Corinth-

ians in the same order in which they had rowed on their own club crew.

Now the training became more severe; the School crew, as thus made up, was much heavier than the Pythian crew had been; and Durant called on them for harder work. But Edward was strong enough for that and liked it; there was a different feeling in the boat from what there had been in the Pythian; it was inspiring to be aware of the smoothness, the rhythm, the speed. It was a good crew. And they all grew browner every day, until you could tell a crew man at once by his color; beside him a member of the nine or a mere track athlete looked pale.

There was one day of rest for the crew—the day when they with all the others of St. Timothy's School accompanied the nine to St. John's to witness the annual baseball game.

Durant, who enjoyed the reputation of being the best-dressed boy in St. Timothy's, and who was constantly endeavoring to raise the standard of those with whom he associated,

conceived the idea of uniforming his crew for this occasion.

A perquisite of membership in the crew was a white flannel coat, with S.T.S. worked in a red monogram on the breast-pocket; no one had ever discovered any special usefulness for this garment except to be photographed in it. Durant, however, suggested that they invade St. John's wearing these coats and white flannel trousers to match; also red sashes and red neckties. The idea appealed to the crew; and when on that morning they emerged in their dazzling raiment, they excited immense enthusiasm.

Wallace, who was to conduct the somewhat uncertain brass band, rushed up to them.

"You fellows must head the procession," he exclaimed. "We're not going to drive from the station all the way to the St. John's field; we're going to leave the barges at the big gate and march round their buildings and down to the field. You fellows must head the procession."

"Just behind the band?" said Durant.

And Wallace laughed and answered, "Oh, of course, just behind the band."

They could not help admiring themselves and each other, and during the journey in the train Edward was mainly occupied in preserving the crease in his trousers and the unwrinkled spotlessness of his coat.

They lunched at a railway restaurant on sandwiches, pies, doughnuts, and bananas. Durant was a good deal disturbed about the possible consequences of such a diet, but as he found there was nothing else to eat, he overcame his scruples and indulged himself as freely as his men.

At the railway station where they left the train there were a number of big wagons and barges waiting for them,—one decorated with red and white bunting. That was for the nine, and all the other boys stood round and watched the nine climb in.

Edward gave a farewell squeeze to Keating's hand.

"Swat the ball a good one for me, Keat," he said.

“Don’t I wish I might!” answered Keating.

He hopped on board; Jim Payne climbed up beside the driver; and then Durant, who was to lead the cheering that afternoon, called for three times three for the nine. They were no sooner ended than the band burst out into a joyous blare, and the decorated barge trundled away before those in it could recognize the tune.

The other barges followed so slowly that the nine were soon lost to sight. Edward sat looking out on either side with eager eyes.

Soon they left behind the pretty white New England village; the road ran between meadows and pastures and orchards and at last ascended a long slope. At the top of that, among the trees, the roofs and towers of St. John’s were revealed.

Before a brick gateway, through which there was a view of green lawns and handsome buildings, the barges stopped, and the boys got out and formed for their procession. First the band, then after an interval the crew, headed by Durant and Edward, num-

bers eight and seven respectively ; after the crew the Sixth Form, then the Fifth, and so tapering down to the little boys at the end. They unfurled their red flags, the band struck up, and the procession moved.

Inside the gate Edward saw the St. John's buildings, arranged in a quadrangle about a smooth green which was shaded by great elms. Walled in and secluded on its hill-top, St. John's was not like St. Timothy's, which lay spread out and rambling in the open valley.

"It's a good-looking place, but I like ours better," Edward said to Durant.

But he did not give much thought to the buildings or the grounds, for there, swarming out of the two dormitories at the farther end of the triangle, came the St. John's boys.

St. Timothy's marched straight up and passed as it were in review before them, while St. John's crowded the dormitory steps and overflowed upon the lawn. The band was doing its best to render "Marching through Georgia;" St. John's clapped and laughed as it went by.

But the crew awakened their greatest enthusiasm and received instant recognition.

"Crew, hey, crew!" was the cry, taken up by one St. John's boy after another, and finally shouted by all together. "Crew, crew, crew!"

There was great clapping, and the crew men took off their hats with the red hatbands and saluted politely.

Edward caught a glimpse of his brother Charles in the top row on the steps, and Charles, catching Edward's eye, thrust out his elbows and chest and gave a burlesque imitation of a cake-walk.

The procession passed and swung out behind the dormitories into the road to the athletic field a quarter of a mile away. Already the St. Timothy's nine was on the field practising; and as soon as the procession was marshalled to its place back of the first-base line, Durant, stepping out in front, hushed the band and called for the first great cheer for the nine.

Just after that, the infield gave a demon-

stration of their abounding vitality ; each one seemed to want to show how hard he could shoot the ball at Keating ; and Keating smothered every throw in his big mitt with perfect confidence and nonchalance.

Pretty soon down marched the St. John's procession, also headed by a band. It went round behind the third-base line and was cheered by St. Timothy's. Some of the boys broke away and ran over to welcome friends among the visitors ; Charles came up to Edward.

" You're easy to find ; my, but you're conspicuous !" he said. " Afraid of grass stains or spoiling the crease, that you stand up ? "

The taunt brought Edward down, and they sat together on the grass and talked. Edward complimented Charles on his nose in return for Charles's pleasant words about his clothes. The St. John's nine appeared and had their practice ; Charles invited Edward to notice how superior they were at all points of the game. When at last St. Timothy's took the field and

Dinsmore, St. John's short-stop, went to the bat, Charles scrambled to his feet.

"I'm going back to my own side," he said.
"From now on you're beyond the pale. But I'll see you after the game — in case you feel like seeing anybody!"

CHAPTER IX

THE ELEVENTH INNING

IN that first inning not a man for St. John's reached first base, and St. Timothy's were cheering gayly. But in turn their own batsmen did no better. Already it appeared that the game would be mainly a contest between the two pitchers, Bell and Jackson — the formidable Jackson, who revealed himself to Edward now as left-handed, and who seemed to reach up to a height of about ten feet and from that point hurl the ball down at the batter with terrific sharpness and speed. He struck out four men in the first three innings.

“I don't believe he can last, just the same,” Payne said to Bell. “Not at that speed.”

While Jackson was striking out the St. Timothy's batters, Bell was forcing St. John's to knock pop flies. In the fourth inning, however, with one out, Jackson came to bat for St. John's and drove the ball over Warren's

head in left field. Amid tremendous yelling from the third-base crowd he reached second base.

Morton, the St. John's captain, came to bat; until Jackson's drive, he had made the only hit that had been secured by St. John's. One strike was called on him; then he sent a swift grounder which Blanchard at short-stop just failed to reach; Jackson came tearing round third base and with all St. John's screaming for him to go on raced for home.

Warren's throw in from left field was swift and true; Payne crouched for it, but Jackson flung himself feet first and touched the plate just before Payne fell on him with the ball.

Instantly Payne leaped up and hurled the ball down to Blanchard who was covering second base, but that throw too was just a moment late: Morton was already there. One run for St. John's, only one out, and Morton on second base: Bell took the ball and rubbed it viciously against his trouser-pads.

The next batter made a neat little bunt that

brought Stearns rushing down from third base to field it; he gathered it up all right and flung it on the run to Keating. It was a wild low throw; Keating stretched for it and scooped it from the ground and then fell prone, but he had managed to hold his foot on the base just long enough. "Out!" cried the umpire, and St. Timothy's clapped their first baseman for his plucky catch.

But Morton had gone to third base on the play, and was now creeping back and forth on the third-base line, impatient to get home.

Crowell, who tapped the plate with his bat, had struck out once before; but this time he hit the second ball pitched safely into right field, and Morton scored. The next batter went out on an easy fly to Keating; and with the score two to nothing against them, St. Timothy's went to bat.

It was the weak end of their batting list, and yet the inning opened auspiciously. Dinsmore at short-stop fumbled Warren's grounder and let him reach first base. Stearns tapped

the ball just a few feet in front of the plate and was thrown out; but it was a good sacrifice; Warren ran down to second. Another sacrifice by Slade advanced him to third; then, with two out, Keating came to the bat.

He had struck out the time before; he did not mean to do that now. The first ball came straight at him; he stood heroically still, he did not seek to dodge it; and then it took a sudden curve and cut over the inside corner of the plate.

“Strike!” called the umpire; and Keating pounded the plate with his bat.

The next ball went wide; Keating swung at the third and missed. Then came a high ball, too high, Keating thought, and let it go. —“Strike three!” called the umpire, and Keating could not refrain from giving him a reproachful glance, and St. Timothy’s could not refrain from uttering a sympathetic murmur. And the score was still two to nothing in favor of St. John’s.

So it was after the fifth inning, so it was after the sixth, so it was after St. John’s half

of the seventh. Then Blanchard was first at bat for St. Timothy's.

"We've got to score this inning, Blanche," Jim Payne said to him imploringly as he picked out his bat.

Blanchard made a response better than any words, for he hit the first ball hard at Jackson's feet; it bounded past him and skipped over second base and out into centre field.

Durant stood in front of the St. Timothy's crowd and cried, "Now, fellows, keep it going, keep it going till we score!"

Before the cheer which he started could be finished, it was turned into a tremendous shout of joy, for Blanchard, the swiftest runner on the St. Timothy's nine, had gone down to second on the next ball and reached it safely. Fred Bell was at the bat, Jim Payne and Harry Carr, the best batters St. Timothy's had, were to follow.

"We're going to score!" shouted Durant. "Cheer, fellows! Three times three!"

And as before, that cheer was never finished, for it was interrupted by a sharp crack,

and then all St. Timothy's were leaping, yelling, swinging their hats: it was a clean base hit into right field; Blanchard came sprinting home, and on the throw in, the vain attempt to head him off, Bell ran to second.

No one out, one run, and Jim Payne at the bat; here surely was where St. Timothy's would tie the score. So at least Edward shouted exultantly into Lawrence's ear while the cheering went on.

"Tie the score!" shrieked Lawrence. "Here's where we win, you mean!"

But Payne disappointed himself and all his supporters; he hit the ball hard, but he drove it straight on a line into the short-stop's hands, and only Bell's nimbleness in getting back to second saved him from being the victim of a double play.

"That was hard luck," said Lawrence with exasperation. "A good clean hit like that! Harry Carr's got to hit the ball — because if he does n't Pollock never will."

Carr knocked a long fly which the left fielder caught; and Bell was still on second base.

“Cheer, fellows, cheer!” entreated Durant.

Lawrence was obedient, but desisted long enough to say to Edward, “Now it’s up to the weak bunch again; I guess nothing but a miracle will bring Bell home.”

Pollock was not a miracle exactly, but he hit a grounder that Wells, the St. John’s third baseman, had to run for. Wells picked it up cleanly, and then hurled it high over the first baseman’s head, and while St. Timothy’s went wild over this unexpected and unmerited gift and while St. John’s stood aghast, Bell came all the way home. With Pollock on second, Butler struck out; the seventh inning was ended and the score was two to two.

In the eighth inning neither side got a man to first base.

The ninth inning opened most disastrously for St. Timothy’s. Wells, the St. John’s third baseman, who had made the costly wild throw, came to the bat eager to redeem himself. He made a clean hit into right field; it should have been good for only one base, but the wretched Slade let the ball go between his

legs. Wells sped on to second base and then on to third ; Morton, who was coaching there, rushed out, and, embracing him, fairly held him upon the base. St. John's were whooping and dancing ; St. Timothy's were smitten into silence.

Morton was next at bat, and after him came the other good batters for St. John's ; the outlook was desperate. Wells stole cautiously down along the third-base line, Bell watched him anxiously, Jim Payne behind the bat thumped his big mitt nervously. Two balls were called, then a strike.

Then Morton swung at the ball ; Wells saw it go in a high swift line towards right field, put down his head and ran for the plate.

But just off first base Keating leaped and reached, and that swiftly-driven liner struck and stuck fast in his glove ; he turned and hurled the ball across the diamond to Stearns, a beautiful low throw ; and Stearns caught it and touched third base. Then there was a burst of shouting from St. Timothy's and a most jubilant convulsion ; the voices of St. John's

were stilled ; and the astounded Wells and the disappointed Morton walked glumly to their bench. Cose, the next batter, knocked up an easy fly which Payne caught, and St. John's took the field.

Keating was escorted in from first base to the plate by the band and by a crowd of friends, among them Edward, — all striving in the turmoil to express their gratitude and admiration. He was first at bat that inning, and Durant led a cheer with Keating's name twice repeated at the end of it — after which, Keating as usual struck out.

But he could be forgiven that many times over—for had he not snatched them all from the very jaws of defeat? Blanchard and Bell each hit slow grounders and were thrown out at first; and still the score was tied. And at the end of the tenth inning it was still two to two.

The crowd had become silent with excitement. Bell had been betraying signs of nervousness and fatigue ; Jim Payne, from behind the bat, had obviously been working hard to steady him. But Jackson was still as swift

and accurate as ever; as in the football game he seemed to be growing stronger all the time.

In the eleventh inning Crowell for St. John's was given his base on balls. A moment later he stole second base. Bell was watching him over his shoulder; suddenly he turned and threw the ball at Blanchard in the attempt to catch Crowell napping; but the throw went wild, the ball bounded out into centre field, and Crowell dashed on to third base.

St. John's had roused themselves again to a pitch of intense enthusiasm; they were shouting incessantly. Fulton, their next batter, knocked a swift grounder to Keating, who picked it up cleanly, touched first base, and held Crowell on third. St. Timothy's shouted at that; these weren't the best of the St. John's batters; perhaps after all Crowell would n't have a chance to score.

That hope was ruined the next moment when Ramsay hit the ball just over Blanchard's head. It was a miserable scratch little hit, the luckiest kind; and over such a wretched thing St. John's were howling like mad!

Crowell dashed across the plate, and St. Timothy's gazed at capering St. John's in dumb resentment. The next batter struck out, the next went out on a fly, and the St. Timothy's nine came in for their last effort.

Warren stepped up to the bat.

"All the weak hitters," groaned Lawrence to Edward. "If it was only Blanchard and Payne and that bunch!"

"Warren sometimes hits the ball," said Edward.

This was the occasion. Warren made a clean single to left field. Durant was leading a nine times nine cheer to put heart into Stearns, the next batter, when Jim Payne came rushing up, seized Edward by the arm, and dragged him over to the crew captain.

"I want Edward to bat for Keating this inning," Payne cried. "You've got to let him, Harry!"

"Don't be foolish, Jim," Durant answered, and Edward laughed at the absurd thought.

"I mean it; I have n't time to argue with you." Payne spoke warmly. "Strike one!"

called the umpire; Stearns was at the bat. "There! If Stearns strikes out! He's got to advance Warren to second! After him there are only Slade and Keating. We've got to have Edward in to hit the ball; it's our only chance."

"He hasn't been practising, he might get hurt," cried Durant. "Three times three, fellows; everybody cheer!"

"He'll have to take a chance," Payne shrieked in Durant's ear, while Durant was waving his arms. "You've got to run the risk. If Stearns and Slade both go out, he's our only chance."

At that moment Stearns struck out, and there was a roar from St. John's.

Durant turned to Edward. "Do you want to do it?" he asked.

Edward's hands were cold. "Yes," he said. "I'd like to try."

Durant hesitated. "Strike one!" called the umpire; Slade was at the bat.

"Go ahead then," said Durant.

CHAPTER X

THE PINCH HITTER

EDWARD ran with Payne to the players' bench. Keating was picking out his bat from the row on the ground ; Edward put his arm over his shoulder and said to him, —

“ Keat, Jim wants me to bat for you.”

Keating looked up, startled ; for just that instant he could not keep the disappointment from showing in his eyes. Then his face lighted, and he grasped Edward's hand.

“ A home run, Ned,” he said. “ You 're the fellow for it.”

Edward turned to Rigby, who was substitute catcher for Payne.

“ What size shoes do you wear, Rigby ? ” he asked.

“ Eight and a half. Why ? ”

“ Let me have 'em, quick.”

That was the first intimation the nine had that Edward was going into the game. They

gathered closer and talked to him eagerly, telling him about Jackson's sharp inshoot; meanwhile, Edward knelt putting on Rigby's shoes.

"Ball two!"

"Oh, if Slade can only get his base on balls!" breathed Blanchard.

"Strike two!"

Then, as Jackson swung his arm, Warren, who had been dancing excitedly back and forth at first base, took a desperate chance; he dashed for second. The ball flew in across the plate; "Striker out!" shouted the umpire, and in the same moment the St. John's catcher threw the ball to head Warren off. The throw was just a little wide of the base; and St. Timothy's, breathless during Warren's head-foremost slide, yelled joyfully when the umpire held his hand down signifying that the runner was safe.

But the yell was as short as it was sharp; Slade had struck out and was walking dejectedly away from the plate. There were two out, and Warren on second base seemed a long, long way from home.

Jackson received the ball, twisted it in his hands, and then stood with his hands on his hips waiting for the next batter to advance. He looked at Keating, but Keating sat cross-legged on the ground.

Edward finished tying his shoe, threw off his white flannel coat, and picked out Payne's bat—the bat which he had used when he had coached Keating. Then in his blue shirt and his spotless white trousers, with the red sash dangling at his waist, he walked to the plate.

For one moment there was on both sides an amazed silence. Then St. Timothy's began to clap, and from clapping they turned to cheering, with Durant leading them,—nine *rahs* and then, "Crashaw!" at the end.

From St. John's there came not a sound—not a jeer. The moment was too critical; and however inappropriate and absurd Edward's costume appeared, there was something in his bearing as he stepped into the batter's place that awakened their apprehension.

Jackson twisted the ball in his hands and studied this unexpected apparition who stood

there so firmly, so confidently. He gave Edward a smile and a nod, which Edward returned; then instantly the faces of the two became serious, intent, watchful. The pitcher deliberated; somehow he felt that he was facing a dangerous man.

He sent one of his sharp inshoots against which Edward had been warned. It came at Edward shoulder high; Edward leaned backward, without stepping away from it, and let it pass: "Ball one!" called the umpire.

He might have allowed it to hit him; but he had thought quickly when he dodged; his business was to drive in a run that would tie the score.

He stepped forward at the second ball and hit hard; it curved out over third base beyond the foul line, a long but unlucky hit, for being a foul it counted as a strike. Still, it gave Edward confidence to have met the ball so squarely and to have driven it on such a long low line.

"Guess my eye is all right," he muttered to himself.

He stepped out of the batter's box and waited for the throw in; and then for the first time he glanced over at the St. John's crowd.

He saw his brother standing a step in advance of the others, his hands thrust into his coat-pockets, his eyes fixed on him with an expression of intent anxiety; and suddenly a thought flashed into Edward's mind: "He'd be just as glad to see me hit the ball as I was to see him shoot that goal!"

Waiting for the ball to be returned, he felt excitement tightening his muscles, so he lowered his bat and swung his arms freely, limbering them up. Then it was time for him to step up to the plate again.

The next ball was too high; he let it pass. Then came one that promised to be good, and Edward swung at it, but it curved out so far that he reached it only with the tip of his bat, and it fizzled off along the ground,—another foul.

"Strike two!" called the umpire. And St. John's shouted then as if the game were won.

Edward's heart was thumping; oh, if he should strike out! Was he going to be a quitter again! He clenched his teeth, he swallowed hard, he watched Jackson with sharpened and unwinking eyes.

The ball came low; he stepped forward, and then let it pass without swinging his bat.

"Ball three!" cried the umpire, and St. Timothy's shouted.

"Good waiting, Edward!" called Payne from the first-base coaching line, where he was shifting from one foot to the other in excitement.

"Good boy, Edward!" called Bell from the third-base coaching line, where he was pacing back and forth in agitation.

Two strikes and three balls: it was a trying moment for every one. Jackson deliberated, shook his head at some signal from his catcher, settled himself twice into position.

Edward was thinking quickly, trying to imagine what was passing through Jackson's mind. With two strikes called on him, Jackson would not intentionally give him his base

on balls — especially as Blanchard, a strong batter, would follow him. Rather than take a chance of giving him his base, wouldn't Jackson send him a straight ball — placing it as surely as possible right over the plate, trusting to the fielders if the batter hit it and to the umpire if the batter let it go?

"A straight ball," Edward decided. "That's what nine men out of ten would send."

The ball came, straight for the plate, waist high. Edward stepped forward to it and swung with arms and shoulders and body; there was a crack that thrilled him; he had a glimpse of the ball sailing on a long low flight between right and centre field; he put down his head and ran.

The St. Timothy's roar swelled and grew; Edward had a blurred vision of them all dancing and waving flags, a glance at Payne on the coaching line yelling and waving him to go on; then with his head down again he rounded first base and made for second, and still the St. Timothy's shout continued undiminished.

"Warren must be home by now; score's tied," he thought exultantly.

He glanced across the diamond at Bell on the third-base coaching line; Bell was leaping, shouting, beckoning him with both arms to keep on, and all the background of the St. John's crowd was still.

So Edward touched second base and came in a wide arc down to third; he looked at Bell again expecting to see him motioning, "Enough! Hold the base!"

But instead — could it be? — had he really done the supreme thing? For Bell was still beckoning frantically, yelling frantically, and behind him there was still that solemn silence of St. John's.

He could hear what Bell was yelling: "Home run! Home run! Home run!" And more and more tremendous grew the St. Timothy's shout.

So, panting, Edward touched third base and swept into the stretch for home, Bell racing by his side, yelling as he ran, "Slide! Slide! You've got to slide!"

Edward glanced towards right field and at

the same instant the St. John's shout of hope broke out behind him. For therein short right field their second baseman had just received the ball and had turned for the throw to the plate : Edward saw the ball leave his hand ; then he flung himself head-foremost, on his chest, with arms outstretched ; he felt his hands on the rubber plate, he felt the impact of the ball against his shoulder, and he heard the umpire shout, —

“ Safe ! ”

Before he could rise to his feet he was enveloped in a yelling swarm of St. Timothy's boys, who pulled and hauled and hoisted him to their shoulders — a bewildered exhibit in soiled and dusty flannels and with a dirty face.

Suddenly into the mob burst Durant, fighting his way.

“ Put him down ! ” commanded Durant, sternly, at the top of his voice. “ Put him down ! ”

His manner was so menacing that he was obeyed, and for a moment there was quiet.

Durant grasped Edward by the arm. "Look here," he said, "did you hurt yourself?"

"Not so that I notice it," answered Edward.

"That's lucky. While you're on my crew don't you ever do anything like that again."

Edward grinned and said nothing, and then Durant stooped and caught him by the leg.

"Put him up, fellows!" he cried. "Give a lift."

So, before Edward knew what was happening, he was again up and riding on the shoulders of his friends, with flags and hats tossing about him and the band parading just ahead, blaring out a march, and the rest of St. Timothy's School falling into column behind. So they swung about the field, zigzagging, "serpentineing," while the St. John's boys looked on gloomily.

At last Edward begged to be put down. He stood for a few moments confused by the rush of boys round him who wanted to tell him how wonderful he was; then he saw Charles waiting near by. So he broke away from his admirers and went to his brother; and then

the boys, understanding, did not follow, but went on shouting, serpentining, towards St. John's School.

"Well!" said Charles. His eyes were twinkling. "You've spoiled your pretty white trousers!"

"I know it," said Edward. "But that's not the only thing I spoiled."

Charles threw up one arm and ducked behind it in exaggerated self-defence.

"You got back at old Jackson to-day, did n't you?" he said with a grin.

"Yes, and if next week in the race I can get back at you, I'll feel that I've squared myself for that football game," Edward replied.

"I've got nothing on you after to-day," Charles admitted. "Ned," he said, breaking out suddenly into enthusiasm and slipping his hand inside his brother's arm, "that was the best thing I ever saw. You don't know how proud I was! When you hit that ball, I — it's perfectly silly, but something came in my throat and I had tears in my eyes — just because I was so happy!"

“Did you feel that way, Charley?” Edward looked at him with shy and grateful eyes. “You know I caught a glimpse of you while I stood there at the bat, and I thought to myself that you’d like to see me hit it. I — I wanted you not to be ashamed of me — here on your own grounds!”

They both laughed a little; then they walked together silently, arm in arm.

The St. John’s spectators were strolling toward the School; they looked at Edward with respectful curiosity; some of them, friends of Charles, sauntered up and were introduced; they had a pleasant word of reproach for Edward.

“You see,” Charles said, when at a corner of the big dormitory he and his brother stood at last alone, “it’s you who are the great man now, and they all want to look at you, in spite of the way you treated us. I guess it’s a good thing I’m not to be at St. John’s much longer: I’d find I was known just as the brother of the Crashaw at St. Timothy’s.”

Edward punched him affectionately in the ribs. From the quadrangle beyond the corner of the dormitory came the shouts of St. Timothy's and the music of the band, revelling joyously on St. John's sacred ground.

"I suppose I ought n't to keep you here with me," said Charles reluctantly. "You'd like to be out there with your crowd, heading the procession."

"I don't care anything about that; I like to be with you."

"They 're cheering you," said Charles. "Listen."

Yes, they were shouting, "Crashaw! Crashaw! Crashaw! We — want — Crashaw!"

"You'd better go to them," said Charles.

Edward hung back. "Not yet."

He looked down toward the athletic field, veiled now by the long shadows from the encircling trees. From the athletic house the barge decorated with red and white bunting was just starting out.

"Here come the nine," said Edward. "There will be cheering enough without me. I wish,"

he added, "some one would lead a cheer for Keating."

"Which one was he—the fellow on first base?"

"Yes. He saved the game once for us, with that one-hand catch and double play. I'm afraid that just because I took his place at the bat and had the luck to win the game, every one will forget what Keat did."

"You can't help that," said Charles. "You're the hero of the occasion, and you can't run away from it."

"But I hope they'll give Keat a cheer," Edward repeated. "I know he was disappointed when they put me in to bat for him. And he might have done just as much as I did."

"Yes, he might." Charles smiled. "But I guess your captain showed good judgment, Ned. To think that you should ever have believed you were a quitter!"

To Edward that exclamation was the best tribute of all. He was silent a moment, and then he said,—

"It seems as if I could never feel quite so happy as I do now; it makes me almost sad. And is n't it absurd to be so well pleased with things — just because I belted a ball good and hard!"

"Ah well, there's more than that to it," said Charles.

The barge came rattling up the avenue, and when the boys in it saw Edward standing with his brother behind the big elm, they raised a great shout.

The driver reined in his horses; Jim Payne from the driver's seat cried, "You've got to ride with the nine now, Edward;" Keating and Warren jumped out and seized him.

"Just a moment," Edward said. He grasped his brother's hand. "I'll see you next week, Charley."

"I will meet you at Philippi," Charles replied.

Edward was dragged into the barge, which swung then round the building and down toward the big quadrangle gate, where now the St. Timothy's crowd was massed. There

the barge had to halt; there was a tumultuous shouting, waving of hats, and blaring by the band. Durant scrambled up on one of the big gate-posts and led cheers for the captain and the nine, and last of all "the fellow that saved the day, the crew man, Crashaw!"

That brought out the most tremendous response; and Edward was inspired to rise to his feet in the barge and stand there, and when the crowd understood that he wanted to say something they became quiet.

"Fellows," Edward said, "I'm much obliged, but you don't want to forget who saved you from being licked in the ninth inning;" and suddenly he lifted Keating up by the collar of his coat, and held him on exhibition, while there was a great shout of approval from the crowd.

Then Jim Payne from the driver's seat stood up and said, "I want you fellows, just before you go, to join in a cheer for St. John's." And on the whole that was the loudest, the longest, the most reverberating cheer of all.

Then the barge was allowed to pass through the gate, the band struck up the St. Timothy's song, the seven crew men fell in behind the band ; the procession started ; and in a few minutes the precincts of St. John's were abandoned to a becoming silence.

CHAPTER XI

THE BOAT RACE

IN the next week there was an opportunity for Edward to have his head turned ; perhaps his father feared something of the kind.

“I wish I could have seen your spectacular performance,” wrote Mr. Crashaw. “I’m immensely pleased that you should have risen so adequately to the occasion. What I want to be sure of now is that you can measure up just as well to the long steady pull next week — where it’s not merely a grand-stand play of the moment. Your mother and I have decided to go down to St. John’s and see the race. It is n’t so easy for us to decide how we’ll cheer. I guess I will wait for her to make her choice, and then I’ll choose the other.”

The morning of the race came, a fine bracing morning, with a keen northwest wind. There was an early start from St. Timothy’s,

for the race was to be rowed at noon. The school had chartered a special train; when the boys arrived at the station to take it, there was Tom Sheldon to greet them.

He rushed up to the crew men first of all, and shook hands and frolicked around them like a great overgrown, affectionate puppy; and then he turned his attention to his other friends.

Yes, his tutor had said he was doing splendidly and had thought he was entitled to this holiday; gee! but he had become the grind; ten hours a day was nothing to such a student as he. But it was great to see them all again; he had n't minded a bit getting up at four that morning to make the connection with their train.

Of course Sheldon had a seat in the parlor car with the crew; but he left it after a while to visit the other cars and shake hands with the little boys.

When he came back, however, he settled down for a serious talk with Durant; they had their heads together for some time, and it was

apparent that Durant was outlining a plan and that Sheldon was favorably impressed.

"They're fit; I can see it," Sheldon exclaimed at last. "And the huskiest, strongest set of fellows that ever pulled in a St. Timothy's boat. Man for man, they're stronger right through than St. John's."

He glanced up and saw that Edward, who had heard the last words, was looking at him with eager eyes.

"Now there's Edward—" and Sheldon reached over and pinched his leg. "He took Keating's place at the bat, and he's taken my place in the boat—whenever Edward takes anybody's place it means trouble for St. John's."

Edward laughed, but such an expression of confidence pleased him.

"Do you feel as if you could hold a sprinting stroke all the way from the start, Edward?" asked Durant.

"Yes. Why?"

"We're going in to row St. John's down—wear 'em out. We've a stronger set of men and I'm going to set a killing pace—if you

think you can back me up in it. Thirty-eight to the minute to begin with, and never lower than thirty-six."

"That's all right," said Edward.

It was not altogether a surprise to him, the announcement of these tactics; in the last week of practice Durant had been testing his crew pretty severely, and they were all hoping that he would let them attempt this very thing; they were all confident of their strength and of their ability to row St. John's down. Whereas, if they did not take the aggressive at the outset and maintain it, but let their opponents set the pace, they might not have at the end the sprinting power of the lighter and — from what news had come to them — the more finished crew. So now that the word was passed round that it was to be a row-down from the start, they were all elated.

"Besides," said Davis, pointing to the trees which were swaying in the wind, "it looks like St. Timothy's weather."

"Yes," said Durant. "A little rough water will be a good thing."

It was almost noon when, after a three-mile drive from the railroad station, the St. Timothy's crew arrived at the St. John's boat-house — a pretty red-shingled building, with low sloping roof arched over by great willows.

In the wide doorway the St. John's crew waited to welcome the visitors, all but Charles, who was standing off under the willows with his father and mother. Edward alighting from the barge ran up to them, and for a moment the Crashaw family forgot all about the crews.

"Which side of the lake are you going to see the race from?" asked Edward. "St. Timothy's or St. John's?"

"Dear me, how are we to decide!" exclaimed Mrs. Crashaw.

"There is really a better view from the St. Timothy's side," Charles said magnanimously. "You see up here we're always polite and give the visitors the best of everything."

"All right," said Mr. Crashaw. "We'll join the visitors."

"We're going to cheer for whoever is behind," said Mrs. Crashaw.

Edward and Charles accompanied them to the path which led round the end of the lake and up to the open hillside where St. Timothy's were assembled. Then the two boys hurried back to the boat-house.

Already the others were undressing ; by the float the launch was in readiness to take the crews to the upper end of the lake where the start was to be made.

The fresh breeze came whipping through the open doors of the boat-house ; the lake was rippling under it, but the decision of the referee had been that it was not too rough to race.

"A head wind too," murmured Durant to Edward gleefully, as they bent over side by side lacing up their canvas shoes.

The crews put their shells into the water and fastened them to the launch ; then they wrapped their blankets round them and stepped aboard.

Slowly the launch swung away ; and from

the partisans on either shore there was a shout ; red flags waved on the eastern hill and blue on the western ; and then there rolled out the long St. Timothy's cheer, followed by the quicker, sharper St. John's.

Edward, wrapped in his warm red blanket and sitting in the sun, shivered with excitement. Beside him Sheldon sat and talked reminiscently.

"It was just there two years ago that they took their spurt when we'd held 'em neck and neck all the way," he said, pointing to a big boulder which rose out of the water a hundred feet or so from the eastern shore. "And they had just a little more left in them than we had, to spurt with. But it won't be so to-day." He lowered his voice still further. "Some of 'em look a little too fine. Your brother — is n't he sort of drawn and pale?"

"Oh, I guess not," Edward answered. But he had had the same thought the moment when he had first seen Charles ; and somehow Sheldon's corroboration of that thought was unwelcome.

Sheldon, however, seemed not to imagine that it could be so and continued, —

“I’m pretty sure he is. One or two of the others look the same way, only not quite so much.”

Edward glanced at Charles again uneasily; Charles was talking with Davis and Durant and seemed in high spirits, and with his face laughing and lighted up he had no longer the look which had prompted Sheldon’s comment.

So Edward dismissed the uneasiness from his mind, and sat trying to strengthen and nerve himself for the ordeal instead of worrying over his brother’s fitness for it.

He stretched himself out on the deck of the launch and gazed off at the St. Timothy’s shore; already they were leaving the shouting crowd and the waving banners far behind. A few were clambering along the hillside, intent on establishing themselves some distance from the finish, so that they might run down with the crews; soon the trees that grew close to the edge of the water hid even these from Edward’s view.

The lake widened, the shores grew more wooded; Edward relaxed all his muscles and closed his eyes. Gradually the talk of the others quieted; they were approaching the starting-point, and that meant a general tendency toward silence.

"Get ready, fellows," said Durant at last.

Edward stood up with the others and with them let drop his blanket. They all stood there stripped to the waist, sixteen of them, brown and strong. The two coxswains, who were just as lightly clad, looked puny in the midst of them.

The St. Timothy's crew brought their boat alongside first and got into it, then paddled off and waited for St. John's. Pretty soon both boats were lined up for the start; the oarsmen slid forward with oars at the full reach and waited for the word.

"Ready, St. Timothy's?" shouted the referee from the launch.

"Yes, sir," replied Durant.

"I wish he'd hurry," thought Edward; it was like sitting for the photographer to take

one's picture and feeling that one could n't hold still another moment. The referee was very deliberate.

"Are you ready, St. John's?"

"Yes, sir."

The pistol glittered in the sunlight, there was a puff and a crack, and the oars swept through the water.

They had taken four strokes when Gardner, the St. Timothy's coxswain, shouted, —

"We 're leading 'em! We've got the start!"

With the head wind and the rough water Durant was setting a stroke for his crew of thirty-five to the minute — which was really as severe as thirty-eight would have been under normal conditions.

"Let me know if they 're hanging to us," he said to the coxswain.

"Yes, right where they were," cried Gardner. "They 're half a length behind — but they 're not falling behind. — Stroke, fellows, stroke, stroke!"

So he shouted to help them with the rhythm, leaning forward with each shout.

Edward, just behind Durant, was feeling all the exhilaration of a good start. The muscles that had seemed quivering and flabby just before the referee had raised the pistol were now working smoothly, strongly; already the pulse that had been beating too hard was quieting. He did not once take his eyes from Durant's back. He wished he could look out and see what kind of a stroke Charles was setting, but he would not indulge that brotherly interest.

A humorous thought came to console him: "When we get far enough ahead I'll be able to sneak a look."

In spite of the cool breeze the perspiration was springing on his face and neck; the sun was beating down with a sudden surprising warmth; for all the intentness of his gaze at Durant's sinewy brown back, he was conscious of the glare on the water. Gardner was chanting monotonously, —

"Stroke — stroke — they're just where they were, fellows — stroke — stroke — they're not gaining any — stroke — stroke — half-

way down we'll drop them, I guess — stroke — stroke."

"How far have we gone now?" breathed Durant, after a time.

"Just about a quarter of the course," answered the coxswain.

"Fellows all look strong?"

"Fine," said Gardner.

"All right; we'll keep right on," murmured the captain.

They reached the mile mark, the halfway point; the coxswain continued to report, "They're hanging on, just where they were; we don't shake 'em off." His voice was getting more excited, more anxious. The shouts of the distant spectators came faintly to their ears — the shouts from both shores blending and indistinguishable. The pull was beginning to wear on Durant's crew; Edward was breathing hard, and he heard Davis's measured grunts behind him.

Durant muttered something to the coxswain; the coxswain through the megaphone strapped to his mouth interpreted it to the crew.

“Anybody that thinks he can’t keep this pace up for a mile more better speak.”

No one spoke.

“You’re all smooth enough,” the coxswain added reassuringly. “They’re lapping us still — but we’ll leave ’em pretty soon now.”

In a few moments the St. Timothy’s cheer reached them, faint but clear.

“There!” cried Gardner. “They see we’re ahead. Even way down there they know! Whoop it up, fellows; whoop it up — only three quarters of a mile to go!”

Then came even more distinctly the St. John’s cheer; and then again both St. John’s and St. Timothy’s together, and so much louder that Edward felt sure both crowds must be rushing up along the banks. He was sure of it a moment later; he heard yelling and shouting abreast of him on either side; they had reached the advanced guard of the spectators, and from now on they would be accompanied by the stimulus of shouts and cheers all the way.

“Half a mile more only!” cried Gardner

shrilly. "They're still lapping us! It's a great race, fellows; clinch her right here! Stroke — stroke — stro — Hi! Hi! We're leaving 'em — they're not lapping us any more — four's splashing — and stroke — look at stroke! — No, don't look at him, keep on rowing, keep on. Keep —"

"What's the matter?" Durant and Edward jerked the question out in the same breath, and in that instant there was a sudden outburst from St. Timothy's compared to which all the cheers heretofore had been but as melancholy ululation.

"He's groggy!" shrieked Gardner through the megaphone. "Their stroke's groggy! He was splashing — their coxswain's throwing water on him — he's slumped on his oar — no, he's sitting up again — yes, he's quit — he's quit — look, they've all quit! We've rowed 'em down, we've rowed 'em down — Hi-i-i-i!"

There was no keeping eyes in the boat then, least of all for Edward. Amid the wild, delighted shouts from the St. Timothy's shore,

Durant slackened the stroke while he and all his crew gazed at the St. John's boat drifting astern. The St. John's crew were resting on their oars, all but the stroke, who had collapsed utterly and seemed to have fallen forward almost against the coxswain.

"He's a dead one!" screamed Gardner in his juvenile jubilation; he was only a Third Former after all. "He's passed away! He's all in!"

"Shut up!" commanded Durant savagely. "Have n't you any sense?"

Gardner subsided, with a stricken glance at Edward; for the time being he had forgotten entirely who the St. John's stroke was. Edward had been slow to take in all the disaster to his brother; it had for the moment stupefied him. Now he rowed mechanically, and suddenly his eyes filled with tears. Poor Charles! To have a thing like that happen! After all his brilliant record at St. John's, to finish off with this!

With what? A sudden appalling thought cleft Edward to the soul. Charles was huddled

there motionless ; St. John's were not even trying to row ; what *had* happened ?

"I'm afraid—" Edward gulped, panic was in his voice, but he went on rowing steadily while he spoke to Durant. "I'm afraid maybe it's serious."

"Oh no." Durant spoke cheerfully. "One or two of the others are almost as done up—I could see. He just rowed himself out, that's all. See, the launch is coming up to take him on board ; he'll be all right."

That might be true, but Edward could not help being apprehensive, and the thought of how his mother must be feeling, and his father too, with no one at hand to relieve their anxiety, disturbed him still more. And meanwhile along the shore St. Timothy's were following their now leisurely rowing crew, waving flags and hats and yelling as if it was the most exciting finish that ever was.

Edward wished they would n't cheer ; it seemed heartless, and it must hurt his mother even more than it did him, to be there and suffering in the midst of it all.

He saw Charles lifted from the shell into the launch, a limp figure. Then, just as the St. Timothy's boat crossed the line, the beaten crew again took up their oars. They came on, accompanied by the launch, and from the St. John's shore, which had so long been silent, was evoked a gallant cheer for the vanquished.

The victors paddled up to the float and there sat awaiting the St. John's crew. Edward glanced off at the St. Timothy's shore, but he could not anywhere see his father or his mother. St. Timothy's were not done yet with waving their flags and shouting; but as the defeated crew of seven men approached the finish line, St. Timothy's paused in their shouting and instead began to clap. So, applauded by friends and foes alike, St. John's rowed to the float.

They were a tired-looking set of fellows; they saluted St. Timothy's with melancholy smiles, and Braddock, their captain, said chokily, —

“Durant, you were too strong for us, — congratulations.”

“Thank you,” said Durant. “I hope Crshaw’s all right?”

There was no answer to that question, for just then the launch came up, and the oarsmen got out on the float and lifted their shells from the water. Edward saw his brother wrapped in a blanket leaning against Sheldon’s shoulder, looking very white; but it was enough for Edward that he was sitting up, and smiling, even though so sadly.

Edward and Sheldon helped him to walk across the float into the boat-house; Edward felt almost ashamed of the healthy rugged brownness of his skin beside the grayish pallor of Charles’s face.

In a corner of the house Charles lay down. “I’m getting better,” he said. “I’ll be all right in a little while. Go off and get dressed, everybody; please don’t bother with me.”

They saw that he meant it; Edward knew that for the time being Charles did not want even him around. So he drew Sheldon aside and said, —

“Tom, would you mind hunting up my

father and mother and telling them he's all right? They were on the St. Timothy's side; I guess they're hanging round near the boat-house now. My father's a big man in a gray suit; he has a brown moustache. My mother's a little woman in a blue dress with white dots on it."

"I'll find them," said Sheldon.

After he had gone, Edward stripped and poured bucket after bucket of water over himself; it was refreshing not to have to stint one's self any longer in one's bath. Somebody touched him on his bare shoulder, and he turned to see Charles, stripped also, standing there.

"Pour a couple on me, will you?" said Charles. "That's all I need to brace me up."

Edward doused him and rubbed him down; the color had begun to come back into his face.

"How you feeling, Charley?" called Braddock, who was putting on his clothes.

"Well enough to wonder why I should have passed away," answered Charles gloomily.

“If you had n’t when you did, there are two or three of us who ’d have dropped a moment later,” said Braddock. “No use talking, Charley; we were up against a wonderful rough-weather crew — well,” — he glanced humorously at Durant, — “let’s just say, a wonderful crew.”

Then others cut in and began to talk about the race — how under the circumstances it was n’t possible for St. John’s to have rowed otherwise than as they did; how they could never have overtaken St. Timothy’s if they had allowed them to win a great lead at the start, and so on.

Charles muttered to Edward, “They’re just trying to make it easy for me;” and Edward remembered the football game of the autumn and how after it he had had that thought.

“What happened to you anyhow?” Edward asked. “I thought before the race you looked over-trained.”

“I suppose I was a little. I was just trying to keep up with you fellows, and it came

harder and harder, and at last, what with the way my lungs and heart were pumping, it seemed as if I just could n't pull another stroke. But I did pull a little longer, and then suddenly I collapsed; our coxswain threw water on me and that brought me to, and I made another stab with my oar and caught cramps in my arms and my legs, and then I don't know — I just seemed to die."

"It must have been ghastly," said Edward.

"This is almost the worst of it," answered Charles. "To face the crowd and know that I'm the one! I guess I've been too lucky while I've been here; I guess maybe it's a good thing something like this happened to me at the last." He was silent while he finished lacing up his shoe. Then he stood up and took Edward's arm and said, "Well, old man, you got even with me for that football game, did n't you?"

"I know now just how you felt when you said you did n't enjoy winning that game a bit," said Edward softly.

"Ah, but you ought n't to feel that way.

You didn't do it to me—the way I did it to you. And you fellows rowed a great race; you ought to feel like celebrating—you oughtn't to feel any other way. Just think! You're the only St. Timothy's crew that ever rowed St. John's to a standstill!"

"It's just that that I don't feel like celebrating," said Edward. "I guess mother and father are waiting to see you, Charley."

They were indeed; they were waiting with Sheldon just outside the boat-house, and near by were waiting a great throng of boys of both schools too.

When Edward and Charles emerged, Mrs. Crashaw started forward, with lips quivering and shining eyes; she caught Charles in her arms.

"My poor boy, my poor dear boy!" she murmured; she could n't go on, she felt that in the presence of all those staring big and little boys she must control herself; so she bit her lip and pressed his hand and stood looking at him with a trembling smile.

He pressed hers in answer and said, "Thank

you, mother." Then his eyes twinkled across at his father and he said, "But haven't you a single word for Edward, either of you?"

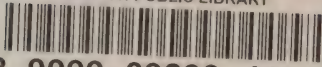
At that moment Blanchard in the crowd of onlookers shouted, "Now then, St. John's and St. Timothy's both together, three times three for the Crashaw brothers! One, two, three!"

Out the crowd came with it joyously, nine *rahs* and then — "Crashaw brothers!"

That was almost the best thing that had ever happened to them, the two boys thought. Perhaps there was one thing that day that they liked better; that was at the railway station when their father said, just before bidding them good-bye,—

"You boys have gone away to rival schools and fought each other, and it seems to me it's only made you care the more for each other. I'm proud of you both. I don't know which is the better boy — or which is the better school."

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